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ABSTRACT

This practicum was designed to focus on: (1) the improvement of the confidence of pre-adolescent girls; (2) the establishment of a positive body image; and (3) the strengthening of assertiveness skills. The writer worked in a group of 20 girls over a period of 8 months using exercises designed to facilitate their growth. A curriculum was developed which uses hands-on exercises to: (1) explore the impact of the media upon concepts of female beauty and strength; (2) examine stereotypes found in their literature and history textbooks; (3) expand their awareness of sexism in daily life; (4) develop assertive skills to combat harassment; and (5) identify strong and famous women in history. Analysis of the data revealed the format of this group effective in increasing the girls self-confidence and sense of positive body-image, but the results were inconclusive for the strengthening of assertiveness skills. Five tables show the results of questionnaires completed by the girls and their mothers. (Author/SR)

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ED 386 653

Improving the Confidence of Pre-adolescent Girls by Focusing on the Development of Positive Self-esteem, Body Image, and Assertiveness Skills

by

Alice S. Combes

Cluster 53

A Practicum II Report Presented to the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies in Partila Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Nova Southeastern University

1995

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

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This practicum report was submitted by Alice S. Combes under the direction of the adivser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in child and Youth Studies and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova Southeastern University.

Approved:

7/13/95
Date of Final Approval of Report

Georginna H. Lowen
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Adviser

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I would like thank my advisor, Dr. Georginna Lowen, for helping me narrow down my topic and make it a mangageable project. She asked the right questions, and still kept my spirit up when it began to lag.

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ABSTRACT

Improving the Confidence of Pre-adolescent Girls by Focusing on the Development of Positive Self-esteem, Body Image, and Assertiveness Skills. Combes, Alice S., 1995: Practicum Report, Nova Southeastern University, Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies. Elementary/Girls/Self-esteem/Body image/ self-confidence/Assertiveness skills/Guidance

This practicum was designed to focus on the improvement of the confidence of pre-adolescent girls, the establishment of a positive body image, and the strengthening of assertiveness skills. The writer worked with a group of twenty girls over a period of eight months using exercises designed to facilitate their growth.

The writer developed a curriculum which used hands-on exercises to explore the impact of the media upon concepts of female beauty and strength; to examine stereotypes found in their literature and history textbooks; to expand their awareness of sexism in daily life; to develop assertive skills to combat harassment; to identify strong and famous women in history;

Analysis of the data revealed the format of this group effective in increasing the girls self-confidence and sense of positive body-image, but the results were inconclusive for the strengthening of assertiveness skills.

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August 1, 1995 (date) Alice S Combes (signature)

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Community

The writer worked in an elementary school of 600 students, in an affluent suburban town that had become a bedroom community for many of the large corporations in the area. Parents were generally very educated and had very high expectations for their children. There were three other elementary schools, all with identical curricula, one middle school, and one high school. It had been described by one of the local magazines as "The Best" in the state for a town of its size. It had a good reputation for academic excellence, as proven by high standardized test scores and the extremely high percentage of students who go on to two- and four-year colleges each year.

Ironically, at the same time, over the past few years, it had been going through a subtle transformation. The state and federal government pushed and succeeded in establishing a low-income

housing project within the boundaries, most of whom went to the school of this writer. There had been an influx of non-English speaking children, though the parents were highly educated professionals. Perhaps due to the economy as the larger corporations down-sized, there had been a great deal of transcience among the population and many children had been moving in from schools from all over the world, most of whom did not have a curriculum considered as rigorous as that in this town. Because of this, there had been a dramatic increase in the number of students who needed Chapter I, remedial reading, and special education services. This had posed a major challenge to the teachers who were generally older and had been teaching in this town for years.

The curriculum offered within this school system was quite rigid. There had been little acknowledgment of individual differences because the average IQ, as identified on the Cognitive Abilities Test was above the national average, and the students had routinely scored on the California Achievement Test above the ninetieth percentile. It was a fairly traditional school system, where all of the elementary schools operated with self-contained heterogeneous classrooms,

except for the fourth and fifth grades, where the student switched for certain subjects. Each classroom was given one set of textbooks, accompanied by workbooks, for each subject and the entire class was expected to work at that level. The gifted program was dissolved several years for budgetary and political reasons; not only did it serve only a few children and therefore was difficult to justify when limiting the budget, but the school district faced dozens of battles in the selection process because a great deal of parents in this community felt their children should have qualified. At the same time, during the past few years, students had registered from other places who were functioning up to two years below the average performance for a given grade and teachers had been overwhelmed.

Though it was an affluent area, the school system itself was not. The library was minimal, and there was little or no usage of educational technology. Teachers still relied on filmstrips to present social studies lessons, and there was usually only one computer in each classroom used mostly for games and drills. The school system each year in the past six years had been wracked by budget battles, and many major programs

throughout the system had been gutted or eliminated. Class size had gradually increased, and the elementary schools were bursting at the seams. Six years ago, the town was presented with projections for increasing enrollment, and for six years committees met, speeches were made, and accusations hurled, but no decision was ever made about how to accommodate the rising number of children expected. In the fall of 1994, the crisis hit the schools full force as two of the four elementary schools were above the maximum. The Board of Education had rejected the suggestions of redistricting, reorganizing the grades, or adding onto existing buildings, and had finally decided it would be best to open a closed school building. This went to a referendum in the fall of 1994, and it passed despite the efforts of a taxpayers group.

Meanwhile, the school of this writer was facing a space crunch that left it with no equitable solution. Music was already on the stage, and both art and library moved to a cart. Classes increased dramatically in size and support staff such as the speech, occupational, and physical therapists were squeezed into small spaces, sometimes in the hallways. The parents were irate and the Parent-Teacher

Association met regularly to develop strategies to bring about change.

Nevertheless, it was a very pleasant environment in which to work. The parents were extremely supportive of the faculty and did not blame them for the planning mistakes of the Board of Education. The Parent-Teachers Association was very active in supplying enrichment activities, sponsoring contests, and in helping teachers purchase special projects. The teachers were generally mutually supportive, and there was a pleasant social ambiance encouraged by the monthly breakfasts and occasional after-school social activities.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

This writer was the guidance counselor in the most crowded elementary school in this district, with the responsibility of 598 students. The job description was varied, as the guidance counselor supervised all standardized testing, maintained all school records, chair and supervised all special education meetings and programs, and occasionally acted as assistant principal when the principal was away. In addition, the counselor did crisis intervention, conflict mediation, and short term therapy with individuals and groups.

This writer used a developmental guidance approach where she went into individual classrooms for lessons related to self-esteem, conflict resolution, and study planning, and developed an assistance program where fifth-graders contributed to the school by doing morning announcements, tutoring, running afternoon bus dismissals, and assisting in the office. She developed a peer mediation project for the fourth and fifth grades.

The writer had five graduate degrees in counseling, special education, school psychology, school administration, and reading. She had sixteen years of experience at the high school level in special education in a major urban setting before coming to this town, where she added one year of high school counseling experience. Then she was subject to a series of budget cuts, and before her current placement as an elementary school counselor she spent one year as a school psychologist. Though these latter moves were involuntary, the move to the elementary level turned out to be a very pleasant surprise, as it was discovered that the elementary setting provided more possibilities for creativity with the job role than possible at the high school.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

As young girls approached early adolescence, they often did not have a strong self-image or sense of self-confidence needed to combat sexual bias or harassment in their environment. Pre-adolescent girls were heavily affected by the media images of the ideal female, and they began to develop a negative body-image. They had not been taught the skills to identify and respond to incidents of sexual bias or harassment by their peers. They were not fully aware of the sexual bias against girls in their literature and textbooks.

Problem Documentation

This problem was proven to exist by examining incidents in the school as well as perceptions of the mothers of pre-adolescent girls. The counselor sent out one hundred and fifty-four questionnaires to the

mothers of all third, fourth, and fifth grade girls. Twenty-seven third grade mothers, twenty fourth-grade mothers, and eight fifth-grade mothers responded, for a total of fifty-five responses. The questions focused on how the mothers perceivd their daughters' confidence level, body-image, eating habits, awareness of sexual bias and harassment from the boys and their abilities to handle it, and the mothers' awareness of gender equity issues in the school (Appendix A). Many wrote extra comments emphasizing areas of their concern. The final results revealed a great disparity of responses on almost all of the questions, sometimes with great contradictions (Table 1).

On the three questions related to their perceptions of their daughters' confidence, the answers varied greatly. When asked in question one about their daughters' sense of self, of the fifty-two who responded, forty-six felt their daughter had a strong sense of self, while only five disagreed. Of the fifty-five who responded to question four about whether or not their daughter avoided confrontation, twenty-seven felt their daughter had learned how to do that while nineteen disagreed and eleven felt neutral. When asked in question six whether or not their

TABLE 1: RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE (Raw Data)

		NUMBER	strongly disagree	mildly disagree	neutral	mildly agree	strongly agree
1.	I think my daughter has a strong sense of who she is now.	55	1	4	4	26	20
2.	I think my daughter feels good about her body as it is now	54	5	7	9	24	15
3.	I think my daughter is heavily influenced by media images of the ideal female.	52	5	14	11	5	17
4.	I think my daughter has learned how to avoid confrontation.	55	7	12	11	18	9
5.	I think my daughter feels positive about her body changing.	44	2	2	13	18	6
6.	I think my daughter holds back her true abilities so as not to stand out.	54	26	8	6	8	6
7.	I think my daughter has experienced sexual harassment.	53	11	6	7	16	13
8.	I think my daughter has experienced harassment from the boys.	55	8	21	8	13	5
9.	I think my daughter would know how to handle sexual harassment from her peers.	55	11	14	7	15	8
10.	I have heard my daughter complain that she is fat.	52	19	4	1	11	16
11.	I think my daughter is worried about the way she looks.	54	10	6	7	18	13
12.	I think my daughter prefers science and math tasks to those involving reading and language.	55	14	12	8	8	13
13.	I think my daughter could identify several women in history who were famous for their own achievements.	55	3	11	9	18	14
14.	I have heard my daughter say things just aren't fair for a girl.	49	16	10	7	9	7
15.	I think my daughter has good eating habits.	55	12	10	21	9	7
16.	I think the educational materials presented to her present an equitable vision of women.	54	12	10	21	9	2
17.	I think my daughter is getting the same treatment in school as a boy.	53	7	12	11	14	9
18.	I think my daughter's school is sensitive to issues around gender equity.	53	6	9	20	14	4
19.	I think my daughter is aware of non-traditional occupations open to women.	55	2	2	4	22	24
20.	I think that in many ways my daughter's learning patterns are like mine.	51	7	9	5	22	8

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daughters held back their true abilities, thirty-four felt they did not, while fourteen felt they did.

On the four questions which focused on the mothers' perceptions of their daughters' awareness of "body" issues, thirty-nine of the fifty-four who responded to question number two felt that their daughters felt good about their bodies as they were. Twenty-seven of the forty-four who responded to question number five which asked how their daughters felt about their bodies changing agreed that their daughters felt good about it, but thirteen could not agree or disagree. Of the fifty-two who responded to question ten about their daughters complaining that they were fat, twenty-seven agreed but twenty-three disagreed. Of the fifty-five who responded to question fifteen about their daughters' eating habits, eleven agreed their daughters' habits were good while twenty-two disagreed, and twenty-one could not decide. Of the fifty-four who responded about their daughters' worries about the way they looked, thirty-one felt their daughters did worry, while sixteen did not. Yet, on question three, of the fifty-two who responded about the influence of the media, twenty-two felt their daughter was heavily influenced by the media's image of

the ideal female and nineteen disagreed, with eleven remaining neutral.

On the two questions about sexual harassment, the parents recognized that their daughter had experienced harassment but that she did not know how to handle it. On question seven, of the fifty-three who responded, twenty-nine felt their daughter had experienced harassment while only seventeed disagreed and seven remained neutral. However, of the fifty-five who responded to question eight about whether or not their duaghter would know how to handle harassment from her peers, twenty-nine felt she could not and eighteen felt she could.

On the four questions about gender equity, the responses again varied tremndously. On question sixteen which dealt with the vision of women in the educational materials presented to their daughters, of the fifty-four who responded, only eleven felt an equitable vision was presented while twenty-two disagreed. On question eighteen about the school's handling of gender equity issues, of the fifty-three who responded, eighteen felt the school was sensitive to the issue while nineteen disagreed. Yet, on question nineteen which asked about their daughters'

awareness of non-traditional occupations open to women, forty-six felt their daughters were very aware while only four disagreed. When asked in question seventeen whether or not they felt their daughter was receiving the same treatment in school as a boy, of the fifty-four who responded, twenty-three agreed while nineteen disagreed.

When asked at the end whether there were other subjects concerning the development of young girls about which they were concerned, several mothers wrote lengthy comments. One parent of a third-grader wrote, "self-esteem and image; being content with who she is and not tryng to fit the fashion magazine's ideals; learning to be assertive; being proud to be a woman (not embarassed about thier bodies, their periods, etc.)." Another wrote, "role models of females realizing their full potential; the development of her body, mind, and emotions into womanhood; honoring the feminine in its power and in its softness, nurturing and sensitivity." Another wrote, "I have always been thin and so has my daughter. Yet, she says she looks fat even though she knows I sometimes worry about heer thinness. Her friends also talk about being "fat", yet not one is overweight." Another wrote, "The media and

perhaps the majority of children place more emphasis on the 'looks' of girls rather than their intellectual capabilities. Girls may also be more shy about being a stand-out than bous would be." Another wrote, "Body changes as it relates to girls developing earlier than boys -- physically and emotionally; girls being assertive both in the classroom anad the playground." A parent of a fourth-grader wrote, "Boys sometimes use 'power language' to show dominance over girls -- i.e., boys call girls 'babe,' 'sex thing', etc. The boys may not mean that they are sexually interested in girl, but they do mean that they can use language to embarass or belittle a girl. Girls have also complained about boys who use phrases such as 'she throws like a girl,' or 'girls can't understand cars, etc." One focused primarily on their academic achievement levels, writing, " Girls who are presently high-achievers; they sometimes fall behind the boys, and become less confident as they become older. How can we stop this? Also, teachers, who give boys extra attention making girls feel less important." One wrote that she was concerned tht "girls athletes are not given the same recognition as boys. It's ok to take boys out of class for special sporting eents, but girls' parents are

pressured into keeping them in school." One addressed the issue of gender equity in schools and wro..., "Sometimes I think teachers believe gender equity is simply a matter of calling on girls and boys an equal number of times. I am interested in ways to discourage sexual harassment, how to teach girls to handle it when it occurs, particularly in school. What roles should parents play? Also, how to help girls develop more confidence sin their math skills and how to preent eating disorders." She also wanted "a program on how to expose our daughters to strong, competent female role models at home and in school." Several other parents wrote simply "self-esteem, self-confidence, assertiveness." One parent wrote that she hoped any program developed would also include an educational component for the boys. Finally, one parent added, "I don't want my daughter to go through what I had to."

In addition to this questionnaire, the counselor documented several curious incidents that revealed that there existed an attitude of negativity regarding femaleness among boys of differen ages. In one incident, the counselor had to intervene in a fight between two boys where one called the other a "girl"; clearly, being a "girl" was construed as a negative

quality. In another, several boys taunted a young fairly athletic third-grade girl because she "threw like a girl," which upset her because she wanted very much to participate in their game; this hurt her feelings terribly, and yet she shrugged it off with a "boys will be boys" attitude. In another incident, the counselor overheard a coach referring to a group of boys as "girls", though the only offense appeared to be that they were either not performing well or were just being noisy. Obviously, this insult was meant to scare them into better behaviors.

The counslor had also documented several incidents where pre-adolescent girls were preoccupied with their body size or appearance. In several incidents, she overheard fourth and fifth grade girls complaining that they were fat and they needed to diet. She observed them not eating the well-balanced lunches brought from home, but skipping everything except the snack. Several times, she overheard the girls commenting about different aspects of their changing bodies, such as their emerging breasts and widening hips. One girl in particular, who was more developed than the other girls, conferred quite regularly with the counselor

about her imperfect figure -- and she was only eleven years old.

The counselor had also documented several incidents where girls were directly harassed by the boys or were excluded from activities specifically because they were girls. As girls began to wear their first bras, the counselor noted several occasions of bra-snapping, skirt-lifting, and a new game where the boys dared the girls to touch their elbows behind them. Furthermore, there had been several incidents on the playground where the boys had refused to let girls participate in an activity just because they were girls.

Causative Analysis

There were three fundamental causes of what Sadler and Sadler called the "self-esteem slide" (Sadler and Sadler, 1994, p. 77). First, there was a great influence on the media on the images young girls develop of ideal physical standards. Images of physical attractiveness and beauty were pervasive in magazines, television shows, movies, and popular music, and the rewards of love and popularity were universally underscored. These images were often unrealistic, and

to compare themselves to these standards at an early age.

Second, young girls did not understand nor know how to handle sexual bias or harassment from their peers. They did not have the appropriate assertiveness skills needed to confront negative comments or behaviors which challenged their concept of themselves. Confrontation was often very frightening, and many young girls learned at an early age how to avoid it.

Third, many young girls began to internalize the images and stereotypes presented to them, either from their peers, stories, textbooks, or from the media and they began to believe them. They began to suspect that things were not equal for boys and girls, and they were at a loss on how to act. They began the slide away from confidence, down to confusion (Gilligan, 19)

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

Literature related to the moral and psychological development of girls

Gilligan (1982) was one of the first writers who challenged traditional theories of male-oriented psychological and moral development. She challenged Freud's theory as one based upon male development with the culmination in the Oedipal complex. She felt that

psychologists were trying to fit females into a male model which focused on castration anxiety, penis envy, and the failure of women to break their dependence on their mother. She examined how Piaget felt moral development depended upon successful playing of rule-bound group games played more frequently by boys, while girls tended to play more individualistic turn-taking games. She analyzed Erikson's stages of development and concluded they were related to male development because the stage of adolescence was marked by individuation. She was most famous for challenging Kohlberg's hypothesis of moral development, a model which she felt was inappropriate when applied to girls and women. Kohlberg had postulated different levels of development through which a person passed to achieve a full sense of morality which Gilligan characterized as one based upon an ethic of justice. She constructed a parallel theory where she claimed women developed with "a different voice", where women defined themselves at different stages of their lives in terms of their relationships. In Kohlberg's model the highest sense of morality was based upon justice as based upon law and reason, with a lower sense of morality coming from a sense of common responsibility. Kohlberg felt,

therefore, a person was less morally developed if he examined a situation in the context of the impact upon relationships. Gilligan found that females tended to focus their identities, their purposes, and their sense of justice specifically upon relationships and community; they therefore, developed differently (Gilligan, 1982).

In 1989, in a talk before women, Carol Gilligan described her early work with Kohlberg at Harvard where she discovered all of his research was based upon men. She found some of the data on women buried in a file labeled "Deviant" (Gilligan, 1989). She challenged the view that girls and women were in fact deficient males, and postulated what she termed the "morality of responsibility" (Gilligan, 1982). She examined in the Dodge Study at Emma Willard School moral judgements made by adolescent girls, and found that these girls were far less likely to evaluate a situation based upon fairness, rights, and rules, but to evaluate it based upon a very strong sense of obligation to friends, family, and people in general (Gilligan, EW.). In Kohlberg's schema of morality, objectivity and fairness were placed at Level Five and Six, and because women were focused on the fourth level of mutual concern, it

was concluded that women were less morally developed than some men. A morality of responsibility was seen from a male perspective as vague, diffuse, and inconclusive as many of the decisions made were based upon context and relationships (Gilligan, 1982). By focusing on the development of morality, Gilligan posed questions about the development of the Self. She found that running through the comments by the girls was the wish not to hurt others and that conflicts would be solved without anyone being hurt. Judgements were tied to feelings of empathy and compassion, and they struggled between compassion and autonomy and compassion in solving a moral dilemma so that nobody would be hurt (Gilligan, 1982).

Gilligan felt that, while men also responded to questions of moral conflicts with care considerations, she found that women's thinking used care considerations as a basis for social reality and decision making. She found that adolescent girls concentrated on the issue of fairness and connection, not with notions of absolute rules that determine right and wrong irrespective of intention or motivation (Gilligan, 1988).

Gilligan found that adolescent girls developed a sense of disconnection when the overriding value system in the environment was male-oriented and justice-based. In examining gender differences, she found adolescent girls were more likely to seek inclusive solutions to problems. When there was a problem with a relationship, girls tended to talk about trying to work it out while boys talked about leaving. Girls talked about responsibility in terms of commitment in relationships. This, Gilligan maintained, was a very different voice from that of a male (Gilligan, 1988). Several writers worked with Gilligan's model and expanded her theories. Lyons (1988) found that in defining themselves, women more frequently used terms for a connected self while men used terms for a separate/objective self. She suggested that the morality of care was not based upon stages of development or subsumed within the morality of justice, as Kohlberg's work stated. She also found that the terms "obligation" and "responsibility" may be understood differently from a justice or care perspective. Johnston (1988) supported Gilligan's hypothesis, and demonstrated that both genders used both systems of reasoning very differently.

Gilligan believed that pre-adolescent girls demonstrated a solid sense of self, but in adolescence began to renounce and devalue their perceptions, beliefs, thoughts, and feelings (Gilligan, 1989). Stern (1991) wrote that the role of relationships in developing self-esteem in girls may be particularly strong. Harris, Blum, and Resnick (1991) wrote that the increase of girls involved with eating disorders, anti--social behaviors, alcohol and drug abuse, inappropriate sexual behaviors, and emotional stress and suicide suggested that adolescent girls were in significant psychological distress. Girls tended to act out their distress in self-directed behaviors, and therefore were undetected.

Gilligan (1991) also examined the behaviors and attitudes of pre-adolescent girls and found that they too were primarily focused on their relationships, and this was crucial to their development. Harris et al. (1991) found that girls at that age possessed a healthy resistance to disconnection, and family ties were considered very important. Gilligan and Wiggins (1988) studied young children and found the two polarities -- care and justice -- were prevalent even in young ages, and they urged readers to note there was no implication

that one sex was morally superior nor that certain moral behavior was biologically determined. However, the points of view existed, and they urged the recognition of both early in the development of young children.

Miller (1991) wrote about the development of women's sense of self, and challenged some of the basic psychological tenets of Freud and Erikson. Much of traditional psychology based its belief upon the tenet that because a girl could not develop a sense of self because she was the same sex as the caretaker. Traditional psychology saw the important task of breaking away from that caretaker and the establishment of a separate identity as crucial to the development of the self. Yet she found that a girl's self-esteem was based upon a sense of being a part of a relationship. Her emotional connectedness was crucial to her development. Consequently, Erikson's stages of development from trust, autonomy, and intimacy was irrelevant for girls. According to Miller, girls had no need for separation, but grew when they were connected in close relationships. She criticized Freud, who had trouble delineating early stages in girls because there was no major Oedipal complex, no

fear of penises being cut off, and they easily identified with the primary care-giver. She felt that early on, however, girls began to receive the message of the superior importance and power of men, and that their ultimate goal was to please them. She found that in adolescence, girls tended to shut down.

Jordan (1991) confirmed that individuation and separation from the mother may be a significant step in the development of boys but not for girls. In contrast, the development of a strong mother-daughter relationship allowed the young girl to develop her boundaries and a more flexible sense of self. There were intense pressures upon a mother to raise a son so that he clearly understood he was different from her, and boys were encouraged to develop after a model of affective expression exhibited by the father. Sex differences were pronounced early on, and she summarized one study where play habits of ten-year olds were examined. The boys tended to form larger groups, had more formal rules, and got involved in direct disputes. The games were structured and competitive, with rules and goals. The girls tended to play in dyads, to be more private in their deliberations, and to play on the outskirts of the more aggressive games.

They attended to each others feelings, and they were concerned about the group. They would even abandon an activity if the conflict within the group was too great because connectedness within the group was far more important than the game itself. This was confirmed by Sadker and Sadker (1994).

Surrey (1991) wrote about a new view of female development which encompassed the value of empathy, mutuality, and connectedness. She called it "self-in-relation" because it is based upon the premise that for women the primary experience of the self is relational. It assumed that all other aspects of self, such as creativity, autonomy, and assertion, were developed within the context of relationships; the self was not developed, then, in a series of stages through which a girl must pass.

These new theories had produced a ground-swell of interest in the education of girls. It had brought about questions about the ways in which girls learn, and the incongruity they felt within a typically male structured model of learning. It had helped explain some of the reasons why adolescent girls felt so disconnected, and why so many had low self-esteem (Sadker and Sadker, 1994). Though Belenky, Clinchy,

Goldberger, and Tarule (1986) focused on college education, they wrote about a model of education for girls and women where teaching was done in a "connected" manner, and learning was in a cooperative environment. They wrote, "In a connected class, no one apologizes for uncertainty" (Belenky et al., p. 221). They stated that the more traditional models of teaching were wrong for women and girls, and that they would profit from a problem-posing model of education.

Literature related to the academic achievement of girls

There was much data documenting the differences in academic achievement between girls and boys (Sadker and Sadker, 1994; AAUW Report, 1992). While girls appeared to consistently get better grades, they did not do as well upon tests. While it was believed that girls did better on verbal tasks than mathematical, these differences had decreased. Girls performed better in two major national surveys on reading tests, though the differences between the sexes diminished as the students got older. In math, they found little differences between boys and girls in problem-solving tasks between elementary and middle school boys and girls, but in the high school the boys began to do

better. In measuring the higher academic and cognitive levels, many more males than females could do the complex problems. Though gender differences on the Scholastic Aptitude Test math subtests had always been great, these differences had decreased significantly. It appeared that girls participated less often in higher lever math courses in high school, and this pattern was similar in science courses (The AAUW Report, 1992). It appeared that girls began school with the upper hand, but by the time they were in high school, in the mathematical areas, they were behind . On all of the major upper level tests, from the SAT's, ACT's, the GRE's, the LSAT's, the GMAT's, and the MCAT's, the females did less well in both the verbal mathematical reasoning areas; they did in fact go into a "test dive". One aspect which might have explained the differences been the performances of males and females on tests was the design of these tests which affected the female scores, with boys doing better on multiple choice formats and girls on essay questions (Sadker and Sadker, 1994).

The AAUW report challenged the view that there was a math gene which predisposed males to the mathematical and science fields. The authors concluded that first,

the gender gap in mathematics was decreasing. Second, they felt that the gap between the achievement of boys and girls could be reduced by changing teaching practices and providing opportunities in the curriculum for boys and girls to practice their skills. Third, they concluded that the gender gap in these areas was not consistent across all ethnic or racial groups (AAUW Report, 1992).

Several other writers documented the trouble many girls have with math and science achievement. Wigfield (1984) found that boys had higher expectancies than girls for math subjects, while girls had more positive beliefs about English and language arts courses. Eccles and Jacobs (1986) found that social and attitudinal factors had a greater influence on math grades than actual math aptitude. They also found that sex differences in mathematical achievement could be traced to sex differences in math anxiety, and this was heavily influenced by parental, and especially mothers' perceptions of the difficulty of math work by their child.

Bell (1989) wrote about the internal barriers to the achievement of gifted girls in elementary school and found they often felt their achievement and social

connections were mutually exclusive, that they received very contradictory messages about talking about their success, that they were worried about failure to the point of being perfectionistic, that they were obsessed about their physical beauty and how they should look before their peers, and that they were confused about how to get their needs met without appearing aggressive.

Literature related to body image

The onset of adolescence results in a profound transition for a girl from a body of an androgynous child to that of a more rounded, curvaceous young woman. While much of the research focused on the psychological and cognitive development process, there was much less focus on the impact of the development of a girl's body image. However, the research that existed supported the concept that a young girl's body image was crucial to the development of positive self-concepts.

Schilder (cited in Beaven, 1981) wrote in 1935 that body image was "the picture of our own body which we form in our mind, that is the way in which our body appears to ourselves" (Beaven, 1981, p. 335). Because there were so many rapid changes during adolescence,

body image was of great concern. During this period, a necessary step for growth was for a girl to change the body-image she had as a child, and develop one more in line with her developing self.

Sadker and Sadker (1994) stated that "the transition between the elementary and middle school may be the most damaging period of a girl's young life." (Sadker and Sadker, 1994, p. 78) The thorough study completed in 1990 by the American Association of University Women, which was based upon surveys of school personnel and boys and girls ages nine to fifteen from around the country, found that there was a self-esteem gap between boys and girls as they entered adolescence (American Association of University Women, 1990). When given the statement, "I'm happy the way I am," sixty-seven percent of the boys as compared to sixty percent of the girls in the elementary school responded affirmatively. This was radically different at the high school level, where forty-six percent of the boys and only twenty-nine percent responded affirmatively.

In this study, it was clear that one notable difference between the boys and girls was that boys retained a sense that they could physically do more

things as they grew older. In contrast, the girls' belief in their ability to do difficult physical things fell significantly when they were at the high school age. Boys expressed more confidence in their athletic ability, which they translated into general physical competence. Many of the young girls started out active in sports, but they responded that they were tired of it being the boys' main preoccupation. As they grew older, the girls left the team sports and joined individual sports such as tennis or swimming. They learned early that society did not encourage sports as a female activity. Thirteen percent of the girls and twenty three percent of the boys felt "boys are lucky" because of their athletic ability, while only one percent of all students felt "girls are lucky" because of their athletic ability. (American Association of University Women, p. 55).

Sadker and Sadker (1994) described several studies they had conducted over the years where they asked students to write on the following topic: "Suppose you woke up tomorrow and found you were a member of the other sex. How would your life be different?" (Sadker and Sadker, 1994, p. 83). The girls responses varied from wishing to just stay as girls to enthusiastically

grasping at the concept and listing their new options. However, almost universally, the boys responded with horror, anger, and disgust. Apparently, there was nothing worse on the scale of horrible things that could happen to a young boy. Some described self-mutilation or suicide, or remaining isolated from the eyes of society for the rest of his life. The authors traced most of these remarks to the feelings that girls were weak and unathletic.

In adolescence, girls entered an age that left an impression upon them through life. All of a sudden their value was measured by their attractiveness and comparison to the media ideals. A simple examination of most fashion magazines revealed that the body image that was considered ideal for today's woman was in fact prepubescent with the narrow hips, flat chests, and slender thighs. Unfortunately, an examination of the current research indicated that many girls adopted this ideal for themselves and then, as a result, developed a negative body image.

Secord and Jourard (1953) defined body cathexis as the degree of feeling of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with various parts or processes of the body. They believed that body cathexis was integrally

related to one's self-concept, and a study conducted in 1953 supported this hypothesis. They found that the feelings about one's body, especially for the girls, was significantly correlated to the feelings about ones' self.

Attie and Brooks-Gunn (1989) described how the normal occurrence of a "fat spurt", when young girls begin to develop hips and breasts, could result in the surge of feelings to be thinner. Girls seemed to experience their bodies as "getting fatter" and along with that the insurgence of disturbances in body image (Wooley and Wooley, 1980). There were several studies which suggest that those girls who began menarche earlier developed these negative feelings more intensely, presumably because their peers were not changing (Attie and Brooks-Gunn, 1989; Collins and Propert, 1983; Blyth, Simmons, and Zakin, 1985). Collins (1983) described how the young girl became preoccupied with her figure, which he maintained may be necessary for the development of a positive body image.

Musa and Roadh (1973) studied the relationship between both boys' and girls' self-evaluation of their personal appearance and their personal adjustment, and found that girls far more than boys rated their

appearance as less desirable than their peers. The relationship between appearance and adjustment was significant only for the girls, not for the boys. Similar results were found by Rosen and Ross (1968). Clifford (1971) administered scales designed to measure body satisfaction and self-satisfaction to adolescents of both sexes and found that the females expressed far more dissatisfaction with themselves and their bodies than did the males. Crisp and Kalucy (cited in Beaven, 1981) determined in 1974 that girls tended to evaluate their bodies on a part-by-part basis, while boys tended to evaluate their bodies as a whole. They found that girls and women had a much clearer view of exactly what they did or did not like about their bodies.

Petersen, Schulenberg, Abramowitz, Offer, and Jarcho (1984) felt that the change of schools from elementary to middle school level compounded the problem, particularly if the girl was going through the physical changes at the same time. Added to this, the young girl was beginning to experience a change in her relationship within her family and developing a different level of friendship with her peers. In addition, she was developing her cognitive capacity and academically she was being challenged. All of this

contributed to the self-image which may have resulted in self-esteem becoming more negative during early adolescence.

Literature related to weight issues

In much of the research, the focus was on the view that pre-adolescent and adolescent girls had of their weight. Storz and Greene (1983) studied adolescent girls and attempted to determine the relationship between weight, body image, and dieting. He found that of all the girls he examined, eight-three percent wished to lose weight, and fifty-six percent of them wanted to lose at least ten percent of their body weight. This was alarming as sixty-two percent fell within the average range for body weight for girls their age. Only twelve percent drew drawings that reflected a high level of body concept. When shown pictures of female figures, the underweight one was overwhelmingly selected as the ideal. A significant number of girls used a high number of negative adjectives to describe their body, reflecting a high degree of dissatisfaction with their physique.

A similar study was conducted by Nylander (cited in Beaven, 1981) in 1971 in Sweden, where twenty-five percent of fourteen-year old girls and fifty percent of

eighteen-year old girls thought they were too fat, where again most were within the normal weight range. Storz (1982) found that adolescent girls who were twenty percent above the average weight range perceived the ideal body size to be ten percent under the average range.

Mendelson and White (1982, 1985) studied body-esteem in overweight and normal boys and girls, and found that by later adolescence (aged 16) overweight girls suffered from very low self-esteem. This was not as relevant when the girls were younger, but the boys suffered when they were younger. In this study, the body-esteem measure was highly correlated with the self-esteem measure.

Much of the research was done regarding overweight and obese girls, and those who were dieting. Dwyer, Feldman, Seltzer, and Mayer (1969) documented the attitudes of both boys and girls towards their bodies, and concluded that girls more often than boys had a distorted image of their bodies, thinking they were overweight. Hammar (cited in Beaven, 1981) found in 1972 that non-obese girls had a better body image than the obese, but it was still negative compared to the boys self-image. Rosen, Gross, and Vara (1987)

examined the psychological adjustment of high school boys and girls who were trying to lose or gain weight. He found that the reducers of both sex had lower body-esteem, but the girls showed symptoms of depression and lower self-concept.

While Dwyer (cited in Beaven, 1981) found in 1967 that one third of adolescent girls in the 1960's were trying to lose weight, Rosen et al. (1987) found that two-thirds of the girls were on diets in the 1980's. The girls weighed as a whole slightly less than the boys relative to their normal weights, but they all wanted to lose much more. In addition, the girls were frequently in the normal weight range while the male reducers were clinically obese. Fowler (1989) concluded in a study done of adolescents that the non-obese and obese females were more weight conscious, had lower self-esteem and/or body image perceptions, and were therefore more likely to engage in frequent and bizarre dieting habits. Searles, Terry, and Amos (1986) confirmed the low body-image satisfaction of adolescent girls, but also found that when they chose to diet they had little good nutrition knowledge.

Monello and Mayer (1963) felt that the overweight and obese were another minority group, and their

preoccupation with weight was similar to the preoccupation with racial discrimination within the black community or anti-semitism within the Jewish community. They responded to several exercises with the same passivity seen among other victims of prejudice. The obese girls accepted readily the social beliefs regarding obesity, and they were extremely harsh in their self-criticism. They were very isolated because there was not an "in" group of other overweight girls. Consequently, they felt rejected by their peers. No matter how supportive their family, there was no doubt that obesity was rejected by the culture.

Many of the authors cited society's emphasis upon thinness. Lerner and Gellert (1969) did a study where he examined the responses of kindergarten children to different body types, and the girls predominantly reacted negatively to the chubby figure. Rosenbaum (1979) studied thirty girls aged eleven through seventeen and found that their number one concern was to "lose weight and keep it off." Most adult women were concerned with their weight, and the diet industry was becoming a boom area of the economy. McBride (1985) wrote about the negative impact the current emphasis on thinness has had on many women and girls' body-image,

self-concept, and sense of depression. Surrey (1991) suggested that this "fat phobia" may be a reflection of the way society debases and devalues the full development of the adult woman. Silverstein, Peterson, and Perdue (1986) examined the historical changes in the definition of thinness, and found that the adherence to a slim standard in society parallels the emphasis on not being overweight in magazines. Striegel-Moore, McAvay, and Rodin (1986) found that the degrees of feeling fat by women were highly related to perfectionism, perceived social pressure towards thinness, a perceived lack of control over food, and the tendency to eat in response to external stimuli and emotional distress.

As a result of this obsession, there was an increase in eating disorders in adolescents (Rosen, Silberg, and Gross, 1988; Attie and Brooks-Gunn, 1989; Williams, Schaefer, Shisslak, Gronwaldt, and Comerci, 1986; Silverstein et al., 1986). Williams et al. (1986) reported that anorexia nervosa affected up to 1% of young women in high schools. This could be tempered by environmental factors such as class and education level, but anorexia nervosa appeared to be more prevalent in middle and upper-middle class families

(Richards, Boxer, Petersen, and Albrecht, 1990; Attie and Brooks-Gunn, 1989). Attie and Brooks-Gunn (1989) felt that girls who had entered puberty early in adolescence felt the most negativity towards their bodies and were more likely to have eating problems two years later. Hinton, Eppright, Chadderdon, and Wolins (1963) documented the poor eating habits of twelve to fourteen year-old girls and found that girls who matured early developed poor eating habits. Also, girls who placed a high value on sociability, independence, status, or enjoyment of food as an end in itself tended to consider health issues unimportant, and had poor diets. They wrote that girls needed to find other ways than food to reach their goals or they were candidates for serious eating disorders.

Sadker and Sadker (1994) described a young six-year-old girl they had observed who had climbed on top of a playground slide, and who saw herself as ruler of the playground. She flung her head back, her arms out wide, and stood triumphant; she was the perfect image of the girl who was at the "zenith of her world" (Sadker and Sadker, 1994, p. 78). By the time the same girl went through the transformation of adolescence, they wrote that she no longer would go onto that

playground. She was no longer in charge of her world, on top of that slide. She began to walk cautiously, "wary of the traps around her." (Sadker and Sadker, 1994, p. 98.) By the time they began adolescence, they had been bombarded with messages which called into question their competence -- physically, academically, and emotionally. Part of this picture lay in the tremendous battle every girl had to go through about her body-image and self-image, and the research showed that many do not emerge unscathed. If a girl did not fit into the ideal image, there appeared to be a high likelihood that she would face years of torment and agony which may or may not be resolved with adulthood.

Literature related to images of beauty in the media

Television and music videos offered dramatic examples of how violence in general and violence to women specifically were portrayed to the culture. This was compounded by the types of roles portrayed by women, magazines and advertisements, both in print and on television, all of which perverted the image of women by putting an extreme emphasis on beauty, thinness, and sexual desirability.

Tan (1979) examined how beauty commercials and their perceived importance in terms of social relations were seen by adolescent girls. Overall, they tended to rank beauty characteristics as being very important in terms of their potential career life and their personal relationships. From a marketing point of view, it was interesting to note they remembered products associated with being beautiful more than those that were neutral.

Literature related to the image of women in magazines

Peirce (1990) examined how Seventeen magazine had been used to socialize young girls. As expected, beauty and fashion was the focus in selected magazines from the years 1961, 1972, and 1985. In 1972, there was a slight increase in articles about self-development but by 1985 the format had returned to the same as in 1961. Clearly the ideology of the magazine was its emphasis on romance, beauty, and fashion, and ultimately catching a man.

Sullivan and O'Connor (1988) compared women's role portrayals in magazine advertising from 1958 to 1983 and found that advertisements had changed and had become a more accurate representation of the diversity in women's social and occupational roles. In 1958, the

magazines showed that 77% of the women remained in the home, while in 1983, only 6% did so. More recent advertisements reflected images of women as more independent. However, they commented that women were used to sell certain objects such as cosmetics and health and beauty aids, which they did not feel were exploitive because the products were primarily used by women. In addition, the authors wrote they believed that the use of women to sell products to men were quite rare.

Ruggiero and Weston (1985) found that in women's magazines it was more likely that women were highlighted in traditional occupations and that employed women profiled in these magazines were less likely to perceive themselves as having power and responsibility in relation to their jobs. They summarized the many ways the women's magazines helped to socialize women and girls in this society. They found a distinct difference between the images presented in the "new" magazines such as Ms., Working Woman, New Woman, and SAVVY from those presented in the established magazines such as Ladies' Home Journal, Redbook, Vogue, or Woman's Day. In the first group there was much less emphasis on "catching a husband",

and working for pay was portrayed as an important aspect to a woman's self-concept.

Literature related to sex stereotyping by children

Katz (1980) wrote that children's sex-role attitudes were fairly stereotyped, with older children's peer expectations being more stereotyped than younger children's. Girls were more flexible in their attitudes than the boys, and peer influence had the most influence in a child's sex-role orientation. Monteith (1978) found that children could identify sex differences in the way language was used, and concluded that stereotyped attitudes about sex behavior and roles were fixed by the age of ten. Hyde (1984) confirmed this, but concluded many of the attitudes were solidified by the first grade.

Literature related to violence on TV

Social learning theorists such as Bandura (1973) had tried to explain why there was such a strong impact of mass media violence on aggressive behaviors. He hypothesized that individuals were more likely to imitate behaviors that were reinforced, and less likely to imitate those that were punished. In the typical television show, usually the aggression of the

antagonist was punished while the aggression of the protagonist was rewarded.

In 1972, Eron, Lefkowitz, Huesmann, and Walder specifically examined in a longitudinal study the relationship between television violence and aggression (Eron, Lefkowitz, Huesmann, Walder, 1972). They measured the amount of television watched by children in the third grade and later the thirteenth grade, and then related this to the amount of reported aggression. They found that there was a highly significant relation between the boys' preferences for violent television programs in the third grade and their peer-related aggression in the thirteenth grade. There was a strong correlation between the aggressive behaviors of the third grade boys and the amount of violence they watched on television. However, there was no strong relation for the girls of either age. The authors felt their results showed that the more violent the programs watched at the third grade level were, the more aggressive the behaviors were ten years later. They hypothesized that frequent exposure to such models of behavior solidified the belief that aggressive behaviors were permissable and acceptable ways to resolve conflict. They concluded that subjects that

watched and preferred violent programming did not consider such violence examples of deviant behavior. Because none of this was found in girls, the authors felt it supported the notion that the socialization process of young girls did not encourage aggressive behaviors. Also, in television shows examined at the time, they found few examples of violent women for the girls to imitate. However, this study did not identify the amount of violence viewed on television which may have been directed towards women, rather than that done by women.

Singer, Singer, and Rapaczunski (1984) used a longitudinal study to identify a causal relationship between long-term effects of television violence and beliefs about the world. They looked at children's beliefs about their world to determine whether or not they perceived the world to be a "scary" place, their aggressive behaviors, their adjustment in school, and their ability to be patient. They compared these to their parents' use of power and punishment as discipline tools, the mothers' degree of imagination, and the family's television viewing habits. They found there was a strong relationship between later aggressiveness in children, a high amount of television

violence watched, and the parents' emphasis on physical punishment. Those children who watched the more violent adult-oriented programs were more likely to view the world as a very "scary" place. However, there was not much specific data differentiating boys from girls except in the school behavior adjustment which focused on the high correlation between violence and negative behaviors by the male gender.

Huesmann, Lagerspetz, and Eron (1984) did a cross-cultural comparison of television violence and aggression in the United States and Finland. They looked at variables such as sex-typed behaviors, the degree children identified with television characters, fantasies about aggression, intelligence, and popularity. They found that in the United States, when there was an increase in violence by boys there was a strong correlation to their identification with violent television characters. They tested the hypothesis that girls were affected by violent programs depicting female aggressors, and found that there was a high correlation between a greater degree of aggressiveness by both sexes when they viewed a male character's violence than when there was a female character who was violent. They tried to separate those girls who were

predisposed to aggressive male behaviors and those who were not, but the results were inconclusive. The authors did determine that boys and girls perceived at an equal level that television violence was realistic. They found that school achievement was inversely related to a child's aggression and violence viewing. The lower the child's academic performance, the greater his aggression, the more violence he watched on television, and the more he thought that television violence was like real life. The results in Finland showed that the overall level of aggression was significantly lower than that in the United States, and though many of the indices paralleled those done in the United States, they found that viewers in Finland have much less of an opportunity to view violence on television than viewers in the United States. They reported a Finnish channel in May 1981 portrayed only forty-seven cases of violent aggressive acts in one week, which is contrasted with a much greater frequency in the United States.

Reviewing the research on the impact of television upon learned patterns of behavior of males towards females led to the examination of the literature on violence on television, and particularly how violence

towards women was portrayed. Iwao, Pool, and Hagiwara (1981) examined the content of American and Japanese television children's programs and found that the violence depicted could be divided into three types. First, there was random violence which happened suddenly and had no relation to a plot. For example, after characters in a cartoon were run over by a car, they could rise as if nothing happened. Second, there was purposeful violence in which the violence appears to be achieving a goal, such as rescuing a guard. Third, there was violence that resulted in genuine suffering which appeared to touch the audience's compassion for the victim. While they found there was no difference in the amount of violence between the two countries television programming, they did find that violence with suffering was more generally depicted in Japanese films, and it aroused distress and sympathy. In contrast, in America, the violence was often done for sensationalism. They concluded that it was not necessarily the violence portrayed which was important, it was the context in which it appears. In America, violence often did not give the viewer a feeling that it hurt. It was therefore gratuitous and commonplace.

The amount of violence on children's shows was phenomenal. Tuchscherer (1988) quoted Chamberlain who wrote in 1976 that the average child between 5 and 15 witnessed the violent destruction of 13,400 other human beings, which did not include what was seen in cartoons (Chamberlain, in Tuchscherer, p. 51). She reported that young children under six could watch up to thirty hours of television per week, and approximately ten million children watched television on a Saturday morning. In 1986, she found there were forty-three hours of air time each week devoted to war cartoons, which usually have six acts of violence in a thirty-second period (Tuchscherer, p. 49).

There appeared to be many inconsistencies in the findings among longitudinal studies as to whether or not violence on television actually caused aggression (Turner, Hesse, and Peterson-Lewis, 1986). In summarizing the many studies, Turner et al. (1986) documented many of the design flaws. Factors such as social class, parental education levels, economic level of the family, and residential location in either urban or suburban areas appeared to have significant influences. However, most of this research did not isolate the types of violence done.

Elysenck and Nias (1978) found that the portrayal of sex and violence in the media did affect the attitudes and behaviors of viewers. There was an increasing concern over the perceived trend to portray brutality towards women in the media. Leidholdt (1983) stated that the continual portrayal of women in films and television as victims of sexual assault and other violent acts encouraged the battering and sexual harassment of women in real life. Malamuth (1983) showed that the effects of media portrayal of aggression against women resulted in an increase in negative attitudes towards women and in aggression towards them. Linz, Donnerstein, and Penrod (1984) found that men who watched at least five movies depicting violence against women came to have fewer negative emotional reactions to the films, to consider them as significantly less violent, and to consider them significantly less degrading to women. In other words, they accepted the violence towards women as normal and a part of life.

Much of this research supported the notion that the violence on television did a great deal to encourage violence and aggression in young boys and men. Many studies supported the idea that those who viewed many

images of violence towards women developed a diminished view of women. However, presuming girls and boys watched similar television shows, there was little research available on what the girls internalized about their self-image when they saw degrading images of women. However, there was evidence to suggest they acquired a very limited view of femaleness from television.

Literature related to the portrayal of women in music videos

Television was not the only culprit. Berg (1984) explored the depiction of women as sexual objects in musical videos and rock music. He examined specifically a music-video which promoted Billy Idol's song entitled "Flesh for Fantasy". The lyrics were extremely suggestive, and Billy Idol was dressed in what Berg calls "chic, high fashion punk" (Berg, p.5). He gave a sado-masochistic image of a mixture of pleasure and pain, and his body language portrayed the impression of his capacity for aggressiveness. The supporting players were mixed-sex couples who were dancing very erotically. The scantily clad and very muscular female dancers were the focus of the camera's attention. Obviously the point of the video was that

these women were the focus of his "fantasy". Berg maintained that the visual structure of this video was set up for the viewer to have just Idol's point of view. Idol was portrayed as being sexually dominant with the female being submissive and sado-masochistic, along with a strong motif of violence. There were shots of aggressive poses with female buttocks being slapped. Though he did not conclude that this type of video had a definite consequence in real life, he did hypothesize on the influence such a video would have on children. He quoted Michael Shore who wrote in The Rolling Stone Book of Rock Video (1984):

> One has to worry: It's one thing for an adolescent rock consumer to hear these songs; it's another when he sees, several times a day for weeks on end, these songs literally fleshing out male fantasies with sexist imagery. This has led to some parents to rethink their attitudes towards video. Should an eight-year-old child see women hung on meathooks?

Brandt (1983) wrote that the violence in musical videos could actually promote violence against women. Caplan (1985) examined rock videos and concluded they

were dominated by violent themes, with twice as much violent acts as commercial television. Baxter, DeRiemer, Landini, Leslie, and Singletary (1985) examined sixty-two videos and found one act of violence in 53.2% of them. Walker (1987) could not, however, find in his study a direct relationship between the amount of music videos watched by seventh graders and their aggressive behaviors.

Literature related to the portrayal of sex roles on television

Signorielli (1989) examined the relationship between television and conceptions about sex roles, and found that the television world was based upon male and female roles that were very traditional, sex typed, and supportive of the status quo. She also found that those who watched more television expressed a more traditional view regarding a woman's role in society. Prime-time network dramatic television shows were predominantly about males, with two to three males for every female. Usually the characters were young or middle aged, with the women being younger than the men. Women were less likely to be portrayed as working outside the home, but most had very unspecified occupations. She found the patterns of violence and

being victimized was portrayed differently for male and female characters, with men more likely to be involved in violence than women. Men were equally likely to be involved in hurting others as being hurt themselves, while for every ten women who hurt other characters, sixteen women were hurt (Signorielli, 1989, p. 348). She wrote that character traits involving home, family, and marital status were usually more developed in women characterized. She claimed there was an under-representation of married men and an overrepresentation of single women. Women were much more likely to be romantically involved, and more were portrayed in homemaking tasks. The percentages for these two did change in the years between 1975 and 1985, with men becoming slightly more romantic and a little more involved in homemaking tasks. Men were usually portrayed as being older and more powerful than women, and they worked in prestigious jobs. In sum, she found that the television images portrayed a world where women were not leaders, not important, and were valued most when they stayed in the traditional role. In many of their roles, they played the victim. Gerbner and Gross (1976) wrote that television dramas taught the role of the victim, and that some people actually

identified more with the victim, which suggested women may identified with the more helpless role.

In 1985, Steenland and Schmidt (1985) examined the television programs for that year and found that there was a decrease in the number of new female character roles that season, and a reemergence of shows focusing on male characters. The world presented on television that year was one where men were buddies and women were invisible, irrelevant, or victimized.

Busby (1975) found that women in prime time and children's programs were stereotyped as sex objects and were cast in traditional sex roles. Tan, Raudy, Huff, and Miles (1980) examined children's reactions to male and female newscasters and found that while boys and girls rated them equally believable, girls retained more when the newscaster was male. They suspected that this indicated that the girls may be more susceptible to sex role stereotyping than the boys.

Caplan (1981) attempted to establish the degree that fifth grade boys and girls formulated stereotypical notions about occupations and personality attributes based upon their television habits. She found that high levels of television viewing were related to the children's assumptions about personality

characteristics of males, with the boys responding with more stereotypical responses than the girls.

There was a strong relationship between television viewing and aggression in children, and some evidence that media depicting violence towards women resulted in an increase in aggression towards women. At the same time, television portrayed women as second-class citizens. There were no studies which posited a correlation, though there was a great deal which supported the importance played upon female attractiveness and submissiveness. If Tuchscherer (1988) was correct, the increase of violence on television had created a distorted view of the world where children and adults were desensitized to violence. This could also be said about violence towards women and the sex roles expected of them. With violence on the rise in television, no statistics could be found for current levels of violent or aggressive behaviors depicted towards women. Tuschscherer (198) wrote about the manner in which children built up a reservoir of images which had a powerful effect upon their socialization. Violence in general, and violence in particular against women,

supported by the passive and inconsequential roles portrayed by women combine to provide a young girl with a negative view of femaleness.

Literature related to sexual harassment in schools

In 1992, the U.S. Supreme Court established in Franklin v. Gwinnett County (GA) Public Schools that students could sue recipients of federal funding, institutions such as schools or school districts, for sexual harassment claims, and that they could win compensatory claims. School districts were suddenly faced with the prospect of law suits for large amounts of money based upon civil rights legislation (NEA, 1994).

According to the National Education Association, a Harris poll of 1,600 public school students grades 8 - 11, sponsored by the American Association of University Women, found that eighty-five percent of girls and seventy-six percent of boys felt they had been the target of sexual harassment during their school history. Two-thirds of them reported they had been the subject of sexual jokes, comments, looks, or gestures. More than half reported they had been touched, grabbed, or pinched in a sexual way while at school. In a

survey by Seventeen magazine on girls from grades 2-12, a similar pattern of harassment was reported (NEA, 1994).

Several examples of behaviors which had been clearly identified as being sexual harassment were described by Stein (1993). In one school, boys regularly chased girls around the playground and flip up their skirts. In the past, the school administrators thought this was just "play" and not sexual harassment; consequently, little was done. In another school, boys attempted to pull down girls' gym shorts. According to the girls' parents, the administrators did little. In one high school, graffiti which described a young girl sexually was allowed to remain on the bathroom walls for sixteen months. In an elementary school, a young girl described how a boy scared her by making sexual gestures. In another school, a seventh grader described how a boy stimulated himself during class and then taunted the girls (Stein, 1993).

Recently, the definition of sexual harassment was clarified so that the recipient could define whether it was unwanted or unwelcomed. This was added to the definitions by the Equal Employment Opportunity

Commision (1980) and Office for Civil Rights (1981), and could ranged from touching, tickling, pinching, patting, making sexual remarks or gestures, and even staring or leering. Legally, the victim's perception of the "unwelomed" aspect was important. The full definition was as follows:

> Sexual harassment consists of physical conduct of a sexual nature imposed on the basis of sex, by an employee or agent of a recipient that denies, limitsm provides different, or conditions the aid, benefits, services of treatment protected under Title IX. (Stein, 1993, p. 26.)

The full definition of sexual harassment as written up in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines in 1980 was as follows:

> Harassment on the basis of sex is a violation of Sec. 703 of Title VII. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when (1) submission to or rejection of such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, (2) submission to or rejecton of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decision affecting such individual, or (3) such conduct has the purposeor effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intiidating hostile or offensive working environment (Stein, 1993, pp. 25-26).

It was not until 1992, however, that the law began to be taken seriously when applied to schools. Stein (1993) described several law cases where the issue was

that school systems did not act properly or in a timely fashion, cases such as Stoneking v. Bradford Area School District; Franklin v. Gwinnett County Public Schools; J.O. v. Alton Community Unit School District; Doe v. Taylor Independent School District, Brawdy v. Petaluma (CA) City Elementary and Petaluma Union High School District (Stein, 1993). In Canaan, Connecticut, parents sued the school board because they failed to respond to harassment on the school bus. Apparently, the school administrators had first treated the incident as "boys will be boys." The parents were suing under the Civil Rights legislation for compensatory damages (Bartomioli, 1992).

In Brawdy v. Petaluma (CA) City Elementary and Petaluma Union High School District the issue began when an eighth grade girl was taunted and teased in the hall by groups of boys, and on he bus they made vulgar references to parts of her anatomy. The school did not treat this as an unusual incident, and therefore did not treat it as sexual harassment. The parents were able to file a Title IX complaing with the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education. The Office for Civil Rights found for the girl and her

parents, and a monetary settlement was made (Stein, 1993).

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

There were two general goals for this practicum. First, it was expected that the girls would develop a stronger self-image and sense of self-confidence needed to develop a healthy attitude towards their femaleness. To do this, it was expected they would develop a positive and realistic vision of healthy female bodies. It was expected that they would also be able to identify sexist stereotype images found in their stories or in textbooks, and learn how to define alternatives. Second, it was expected that the girls would learn specific skills needed to combat sexual bias and harassment in their environment. To do this, it was expected they would first be able to identify patterns of stereotyping in magazines, television and advertisements that lead to bias and harassment. Then,

it was expected they would learn assertiveness skills to combat sexual bias or harassment from their peers.

Expected Outcomes

To accomplish these goals, it is expected that as a result of this practicum sixteen of the twenty girls participating would successfully identify patterns of stereotyping of females in magazines, television, and advertisements. This would be measured by evaluating a chapter in the notebook developed over the course of this practicum, consisting of collections of clippings, advertisements, articles, and summaries of television and movie shows. It was expected that the notebook of each girl would display ten examples of each.

It was expected that through activity lessons, sixteen of the twenty girls would successfully develop a positive and realistic vision of healthy bodies. Each girl would successfully participate in the development of a magazine made up of stories and daily examples to be distributed to girls in the fourth and fifth grade; it was expected that each girl would participate in each group session and submit one item in this magazine.

It was also expected that sixteen of the twenty girls would display successfully positive assertiveness

skills when faced with snide comments and exclusory situations by their peers. To measure this, each girl would participate in a role playing situation in a small group and then be evaluated by the group on the type of interactions used. The standard of achievement on this evaluation for each girl would be four out of five criteria would be rated positively by the other girls (Appendix D).

It was also expected that sixteen of the twenty girls would successfully identify sexual stereotypes in their history and literature books. This would be measured by evaluating a specific chapter of each girl's notebook, where each girl was to describe a stereotype they found. The standard of achievement would be that each girl would identify at least five examples from their stories, and three from their textbooks.

It was also expected that sixteen of the twenty girls would successfully identify and share with the school information they learn about strong, successful, and talented women who were prominent today. This would be measured by the successful completion of a research and poster project by each girl on a particular prominent woman. The standard of

achievement would be the successful display of the work on a bulletin board designated for the group.

It was also expected that sixteen of the twenty girls would display an increase in self-confidence and leadership through specific activities focusing on their awareness of sexual bias and harassment. This would be measured by the successful completion and distribution of the magazine and poster project designed to share with the school the facts of gender bias and sexual harassment. This would also be measured by the successful presentation before the fourth and fifth grade classes of specific topics. chosen by the individual girls.

Measurement of Outcomes

This project would be evaluated using questionnaires completed by the girls, one completed by an observer measuring their degree of assertiveness in a role-playing situation, one self-assessment about their own progress, and a final inventory of the projects they completed. Each girl would complete a notebook with chapters on media influence, gender bias, harassment, stereotyping, and things they wished to change. The group would complete a "magazine" with stories, biographies, illustrations, and explanations

which wouuld be distributed with the fourth and fifth grades. Each girl would participate in a role-playing to evaluate her assertiveness skills, and be rated by an observer (Appendix D). The girls participating would complete a short questionnaire to see if they themselves felt they acquired more confidence and skills in confronting sexual bias and harassment in their environment (Appendix B). The girls would complete a skit or group presentation to present before all of the fourth and fifth grades, explaining the issues. Upon completion of the skit, they would write as a group a news-release about their project, and complete a questionnaire evaluating their whole experience (Appendix E).

It was expected that at least sixteen of the twenty girls would be evaluated positively by their observer-peer when doing the assertiveness exercise (Appendix D). At least sixteen of the twenty girls who participate would respond in a short questionnaire that they felt more self-confident about themselves and in their ability to assert themselves, to identify sexism in their environment, and to deal with it appropriately (Appendices B and C). At least sixteen of the twenty girls would successfully complete a notebook which

documented their own learning progress. At least sixteen of the twenty girls would successfully participate in compiling a magazine to be distributed to the fourth and fifth grade classes, and they would describe the experience with a majority of positive words on the questionnaire.

Upon completion of this practicum, the data of each questionnaire would be examined to determine if the girls perceived a change in their attitudes. The results from each questionnaire would be presented in charts, but also described in detail in narrative form.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Restatement of the Problem

The problem addressed by this practicum was that young girls approached early adolescence without a strong self-image or sense of self-confidence needed to combat sexual bias or harassment in their environment. They were heavily affected by the media images of the ideal female, and they had begun to develop a negative body-image. They had not been taught the skills to identify and respond to incidents of sexual bias or harassment by their peers. Furthermore, they were not fully aware of sexual bias against girls in their literature and textbooks.

Discussion and Evaluation of Possible Solutions

There was little reference to preventative programs for young girls targeting these topics, other than a few specifically targeting math and science skills. Some schools had designed after-school programs for girls who had shown promise in the math

and science areas (Fleetwood, 1994). Programs had been designed targeting Middle School and High School students with the focus on date rape and sexual harassment (Stein, 1993).

There was no reference to any schools using curricula aids which focused on these topics at the elementary level. In a preliminary review of published materials designed for counselors, psychologists, and elementary guidance programs there were several materials designed to develop the self-esteem in children, but none focused on specific issues related to young girls; none mentioned sexual bias or harassment at this age (Vernon, 1989; Jackson, Jackson, and Monroe, 1983; Anderson, 1981; McGinnis and Goldstein, 1984; Borba, 1989; Pincus, 1990; Shapiro, 1993). The Stone Center for Research in Women Studies released a new curricula in January, 1995 which focused on sexual harassment in grades six through twelve (Stein, 1994).

In order to address this problem, the writer investigated several related areas in the field of counseling. Because the girls would be working together and then presenting the materials to their peers, the writer examined some of the models found in the

literature on peer mediation. The literature suggested that children were more receptive to help from peers who were properly trained, and the negative behaviors would decrease (Tindall and Foster, 1993). Peer-based intervention programs had primarily been used at the secondary and middle school level, but there had been some successful programs using elementary children. The models ranged from small helping groups involving only a few students which focused on tutoring and buddy systems to a thematic approach involving whole schools (Klep, Halper, and Perry, 1986).

Several articles described how the authors used peers effectively. Gumaer (1973) described how he had trained them to develop a human relations guidance program, using the children as peer-facilitators in the classroom. McCann (1975) described how she had selected peer counselors, trained them, and then set up a school drop-in center for fifth and sixth graders. Bogat, Jones, and Jason (1980) described how they used peers to help students who were having difficulty transitioning when an elementary school closed. Grady (1980) described how a peer counseling program was established in her middle school to combat drug and alcohol abuse. Canning (1983) described very effective

programs established in Florida which used children for peer tutors, special friends, group leaders, and guidance assistants. Konet (1992) described how a peer helper program had trained students to help with at-risk children, and included group counseling and participation in the discipline system to help troubled youth. Lane and McWhirter (1992) described the success with the peer mediation model they developed for both elementary and middle school children based upon four stages of mediating disputes, with the children serving as the peer mediators. Mastroianni and Dinkmeyer (1980) described the exercises they developed to encourage peer facilitation and the training of peer counselors to serve as co-leaders in groups, as friends to lonely or troubled students, as tutors, as drop-in center counselors, as orientation aides, and as "encouragement" guides for the school. Varenhorst (1973) described a peer counseling program developed in Palo Alto, California which trained students to receive referrals from teachers. This program specifically focused on developing the self-esteem of students and on developing positive peer relationships. Frank, Ferdinand, and Bailey (1975) described a program where academically strong students from the mainstream

trained to be peer counselors and then worked with special education students. They proved to be very effective in helping transfer students. Ehlert (1975) described how he trained middle school children to work in groups with other children, specifically targeting the typical cruelty displayed between children at that age. Schmitt and Furniss (1975) described how they used high school students to help children at the elementary level. Gumaer (1976a) described how he set up a "friendship class" which utilized peers to encourage positive social skills. In another article, Gumaer (1976b) described the steps he used in training his peer facilitators in a twelve session, three week curriculum. Bowman and Myrick (1983) described a program they developed where they trained the elementary students to be sensitive listeners who could give good feedback, with the aim of promoting personal and academic growth through positive relationships. Campbell (1983) wrote how critical it was to train the peer counselors thoroughly, and that it was imperative that the training match the setting, the task, and the counselor's style.

The writer examined many samples of materials used in programs designed to develop the self-esteem of

elementary children. The books and programs examined were The Building Blocks of Self-Esteem, by L. Shapiro; Thinking, Feeling, Behaving, by A. Vernon; Getting Along with Others: Teaching Social Effectiveness to Children, by N. Jackson, D. Jackson, and C. Monroe; Esteem Builders: a K-8 Self-Esteem Curriculum for Improving Student Achievement, Behavior, and School Climate, by M. Borba; Skill-streaming the Elementary School Child, by E. McGinnis and A. Goldstein; Feeling Good About Yourself, by D. Pincus; and Thinking, Changing, Rearranging: Improving Self-Esteem in Young People, by J. Anderson. None specifically addressed issues targeting the problems facing young girls growing up.

The counselor investigated some of the materials designed to address stress management in children. Specifically, the writer examined books such as Don't Pop You Cork on Mondays, by A. Moser; COPING: a Guide to Stress Management, by C. Sanders and C. Turner; and Living with Stress -- Middle Grades: Journal Activities for Personal Growth, by S. Sylvester.

The counselor examined several issues of New Moon, a new magazine with an editorial board of girls ages eight to fourteen, with girl contributors from all over

the world. It was designed for "every girl who wants her voice heard and her dreams taken seriously" (New Moon, 1994).

In examining all of the possible solutions to this problem, the author considered several alternate ideas before designing the plan for this practicum. For one, the writer examined the possibility of writing a series of stories with young girls as the main characters who must face sexism, and using these stories as examples in a pilot study of girls. Another possibility was to develop a curriculum designed to focus on the attitudes of young boys. Another possibility was to develop a curriculum designed for both sexes together, focusing on the issues relevant to all children. Another possibility was to develop a program designed to involve the fathers. Another possibility was to focus on gender equity issues within the instructional domain, and to develop a training program for the teachers. Another possibility was to form a group of girls which would meet regularly over the eight month period, with the focus being on heightening the girls' awareness of specific issues related to sexism.

Description of Solution Selected

In order to address the problems presented in this practicum, the writer first presented the results of the parent questionnaire to a meeting of the Parent-Teachers Association. She asked for volunteers from the parents to formulate an advisory group to assist on the development of the curriculum. This group was designed to look at topics ranging from the influence of the media, the development of body-image, the stereotypes found in literature and textbooks, and assertiveness training models. It met six times.

From this, the writer developed a curriculum which a counselor could use in a small group. The writer used this curriculum with a pilot group of twenty girls drawn from the fifth grade. Upon completion of the pilot program, the girls were evaluated to determine if it had a positive impact.

The writer selected twenty girls to participate in the pilot program, which met over the next eight months for two times each week, for a total of forty-eight sessions. Membership was totally voluntary. Twenty-two girls responded, so the writer decided to increase the number who could participate to that number. They met over eight months two times each week, which, because

of the school calendar and snow days, came to a total of forty-eight sessions.

The writer decided to focus on the girls themselves because there was so little information available on their awareness and so few materials designed for this age level. Once the group was formed, it was established that they would meet twice a week in the art room, where there was ample art supplies, tables, and good lighting. As the time was designated as their lunch hour, the girls carried their lunches from the lunch room down to the art room. The art room proved to be advantageous because it was at the far end of the school, away from the lunch room and the possibility of interruption by the boys. Each week, the writer presented a new topic and exercise. On Tuesdays, the girls could remain for the full hour so the activity usually involved an activity utilizing the art supplies. On Thursdays, the format was usually in the form of discussion about the topic.

The writer developed a curriculum which consisted of daily exercises drawn from a variety of sources and adapted for the particular group. The writer used this curriculum with a pilot group of twenty girls drawn from the fifth grade. Upon completion of the pilot

program, the girls were evaluated to determine if the curriculum had a positive impact. During one of the last sessions, the girls invited their mothers and shared what they learned. It was expected that this format would be very effective because it allowed the girls and mothers opportunity to be actively involved and to share the topics together.

Report of Action Taken

During the first month, the writer presented the summary of the parent questionnaire to the Parent-Teachers' Association, as well as an overview of the impact of sexual discrimination and harassment upon young girls. She solicited volunteers among the mothers, and eight interested women responded. The original goal of eight meetings could not be met because the mothers were too busy with the impending holiday season. However, the group met six times before the Christmas vacation. During three of these sessions the mothers focused on the books which were in the school book fair. Four of the mothers were on the organizing committee and brought in samples of the books sold to the girls. The other three sessions were focused on the particular areas on which they hoped to see the pilot study concentrate and ways they could

promote the theme of gender equity. One mother was very active in the Parent-Teachers Association and took the information the group had developed to the leadership with the ambition of having them develop a school-wide gender awareness program.

At the same time, immediately after the writer did the presentation before the Parent-Teachers Association, the writer sent an invitation out to every fifth grade girl along with a permission slip which needed to be signed by the parents. The invitation urged them to join a Girls Club to learn "about the wonderful things about being a girl; about the exciting changes in girls' bodies; about how to stand up to boys when they bother you; about famous and strong women; about how to change things you don't like." By the middle of the following week, there were enough volunteers to have a preliminary meeting outlining the goals of the program. The room was selected, and the time schedule agreed upon by all participants.

During the second month, the first major task given the girls was to decorate their looseleaf notebooks with a collage of strong images of women. This took longer than expected, and covered the first six sessions. The girls used examples from magazines

they brought in, and it was a perfect introduction to the unit on the images of women as presented in various forms of the media. After they had covered the notebooks, they had to divide it up into three sections: media, stereotypes, and famous women. During the next week, the girls focused on images they discovered in magazines which they brought from home, with particular emphasis on advertising patterns. They spent two days just cutting out images of strong, athletic women and pasting them on sheets to go into their notebook.

During the third month, the girls continued by examining other types of advertisements, particularly those for perfume. Some labeled the first group of atheltic women as "Strong Women" and the second group selling perfume as "Romantic Women". During the second week, they focused on how women were portrayed in television, with the girls supplying examples they had seen themselves. In the the third week, they focused on how women were portrayed in the "pop culture", from music to MTV. Two girls brought in music they had borrowed from an older sibling. In the fourth week, the focus was on the identification of stereotypes in their literature. During the first week, the entire group of

girls and the writer visited the book sale and analyzed the types of characters in the books being sold. Later that week, the writer showed them some old books found in the library where the female characters were far more passive and less adventuresome than the ones found at the fair. The girls defined categories in which they could classify the characters and the group worked together using the large board in the art room. They defined such categories as "frilly", "independent", "strong", "worrying about being popular", "adventurous", and then listed the books in which they found female characters that fit that description. Then, going through a pile of forty-five books brought down from the library, the girls worked in pairs formulating their own lists. Without reading the books, they evaluated the characters by the way the female characters were described initially and by the kinds of situations they appeared to be in. Each pair of girls worked with ten books. Then they copied into their notebook lists of books where the female character fit the categories they had defined. This proved to be very difficult, and they needed much assistance from the writer. This exercise carried over into the next week, where the writer brought in their

history textbook and the group collectively found samples of stereotypes of women in history. The first chore given the girls was to count how many famous women were listed in the first six chapters -- covering America from the early colonial days through the civil war. The group found only six.

During the fourth month, they each selected a famous women they wanted to display in the group bulletin board for "Women in History Month", and colored it using the materials from the art room. It took six days to compile this collection of art as well as a large descriptive banner in bold colors It took two days to hang it in an enormous display in the main hall of the school. It consisted of pictures of thirty-two famous women arranged around "March is Women in History Month", and one girl colored a playful "(her)" under the word "history".

During the fifth month, each day the girls took turns reading into the morning announcement a news item about one famous women in history. Each reading started with "March is Women in History Month, and today we are going to introduce you to a famous woman in history." Then, the girl would read a short paragraph summarizing that woman's achievements. In

the group, the first week they focused on the suffragettes, and they reviewed several of the materials available from the library. In the second week, they compiled a packet from selections from The Women's History Project(1994) and filled their notebook section on famous women.

It was most fortunate that at this time the state university's girls' basketball team was becoming very successful in NCAA competitions. There were daily stories about the individuals on the team, and by the third week of this month the focus became famous living women in sports. Articles in the local newspaper about the rise of women's sports were used as a basis for discussion, and they all asked for copies for their notebooks. This theme continued until the basketball team won the national title, and there were dozens of examples provided in the media which provided the basis for a discussion about strong, healthy female bodies. The media coverage of the basketball team proved to be most helpful. The girls decided they wanted to present this theme in a skit form to the entire fourth and fifth grades. During the last week of Women's History Month, the girls presented a twenty-minute skit entitled "Famous Women Athletes" during the fourth and

fifth grade lunches, in the cafeteria. After describing eight famous athletes, they ended with a chorus of a poem they wrote entirely by themselves: "Women are very strong, don't get us wrong; women athletes can be the best, they can really pass the test."

The sixth month began with an analysis of different female body types, with an emphasis on the positive attributes of each. In the first week, the writer brought in notecards with samples of paintings by Reubens and Monet and contrasted these with pictures of several models found in magazines. In these two sessions, there was quite a lively discussion about the different body types of their mothers. In the second week, they focused on healthy eating patterns and an introduction to what an eating disorder would look like. During the third week, the focus was on the normal changes happening to their bodies. Bolstered by the fact that the girls had seen a film with the school nurse about these changes, they wanted more information. The next six sessions, well into the seventh month, focused on the changes they would all go through. Each day the girls discussed menstruation and the mechanics of the equipment used, the kinds of

underwear they should use, the clothes they should wear, and what they could expect when their breasts and hips developed. The writer provided materials and information appropriate to this discussion (Madaras, 1987; Madaras, 1988).

In the last half of the seventh month, the focus was on developing assertiveness skills when facing their male peers. During these two weeks, the writer provided role-playing situations which were analyzed so that the girls could identify harassing situations and alternative ways of coping.

As the eighth month began, the focus was on how to send strong "I-messages" when they were angry, and when to report an unpleasant situation. During two sessions, they practiced saying a variety of statements which assertively stated they wanted something to be stopped or changed. The girls provided examples from their own lives, and in the third and fourth sessions they divided up into dyads and practiced playing the role of the assertive girl. They evaluated each other in this exercise.

During the next two sessions, the girls planned and designed an invitation for a final pizza party, to which they invited their mothers. During the last week

of the practicum, the girls and twelve of the mothers attended a local park for a pizza picnic. The girls brought the soda, paper supplies, and desserts and the entire group spread out on the lawn. Then, forgetting their obligations, the girls ran off to play, and the mothers cleaned up.

The writer soon learned that many of the topics could not be explored in great depth. For example, it was not appropriate to explain much of the sexual themes in the media for they could not comprehend the innuendos in the messages. The writer decided to focus on perfume advertisements which emphasized the romantic entanglements pictured, and sportswear advertisements that generally showed an athletic, active woman. While they were not developmentally ready for deep analysis of why certain postures and poses were used, they were able to understand that the images of women were being used to sell products. For example, the writer showed them an advertisement for hiking boots which showed a picture of a naked woman (with no particular body parts showing) crouching in the desert. The entire group agreed that was "pretty stupid." They were able to identify that there were females on Bay Watch who bounced about in skimpy outfits that were totally

inappropriate; again, the girls decided they looked "stupid."

The concept of filling chapters in the notebook did not prove to be as effective as hoped. As this group met during the lunch hour, this proved to be an unpopular approach because girls did not want to do what they perceived to be as work; instead, they much preferred to discuss each point in detail and to provide examples from their own lives. They did not want to write out answers or fill out worksheets, but they loved creating the collages for their notebooks. They worked and ate at the same time, so the sound level was often quite high.

The writer was pleased to see that the girls really enjoyed the media images of strong, healthy girls and women. They identified the postive aspects of advertisements such as those for Reebok and Nike which showed muscular women who looked like they were conquering their world. During the annual book fair, several of the girls reported to the writer on books which had girls as strong, adventurous characters -- some who were stronger than the male characters. Again, they found the task of examining different literature

samples and their history book too much like a chore, and they verbalized this very eloquently.

As mentioned earlier, the planning by the girls' basketball team of the state university to choose this year to be the national champions could not have been more fortuitous. The girls followed it very closely, and knew every name of the local heroes. They perceived them as "their" heroes, real women who were very successful in a world usually dominated by male heroes.

The girls were surprisingly fascinated by the history of the suffragettes. The writer showed them excerpts from a documentary showing the fight for women's suffrage, showing the violence and hatred surrounding them. The girls were shocked. One girl reported on an interview she had with her grandmother, aged 80, who recalled her own mother marching in suffragette parades. The girls were genuinely mystified as to why so many people were against them, "just because they wanted to vote." It was hard for them to comprehend that it was precisely because they were women that they were the focus of such vehemance. Again and again, they asked, "Why?"

The girls particularly enjoyed the preparation for the bulletin board on Famous Women in History. They

were very proud of it when it was displayed in the main Ohall of the school for all to see. Using materials from the National Women's History Project (National Women's History Project, 1992; National Women's History Project, 1990), each one took a turn reading in the morning announcements over the public address system about a famous woman in history. As expected, Amelia Earhart, Helen Keller, and Eleanor Roosevelt were the most popular famous women, but the writer was pleased they became familiar with such famous women as Belva Lockwood, Alice Paul, Bessie Coleman, Margaret Bourke-White, and Florence Griffith Joyner.

Using these materials, they presented a short but very lively skit during their lunch period to the fourth- and fifth-graders. Though initially this project had planned for them to create a program focusing on gender bias, this proved to be too theoretical for them. They really responded to the stories about the female athletes as true heroes for them. For example, the concept of "women's rights" did not seem as concrete to them as "the first woman who swam the English Channel." They were very nervous about the reaction of the boys when they performed, but perhaps because the writer and the principal were

present, there were no difficult moments. In small groups, they read a short paragraph about one of eight women while one girl gave a brief introduction. The girls in the audience were extremely receptive, and afterwards several fourth grade girls approached the writer and said they wanted her to form a girls' club for them.

During the unit on changes in their bodies, the girls were bursting with questions. The writer realized they needed more sessions to discuss their concerns so extended the unit. For example, they fixated on the types of brassieres worn by women and whether or not they would turn out like their mothers. One girl innocently blurted out that her mother did not wear one, and therefore was very "saggy." This brought about a discussion of the different choices in undergarments and how every woman was different. They had all participated in a two-hour session with the school nurse about the biological changes, and they wanted to talk more. One girl had already started her menarche, and there was quite a frank discussion about how to handle its onset. Upon several occasions, it was all the writer could do to not smile.

The writer discovered there was a need to cover these topics more thoroughly than originally planned. Using illustrations and charts from two books on the development of girls (Madaras, 1988; Madaras, 1986) the writer reviewed the process of development through which they would all pass. They had a clear need to discuss over and over this topic.

Several of the girls had begun to develop, and they expressed grave concern about some of the reaction from the boys. During the last month, the girls practiced how to handle uncomfortable situations. For example, one girl reported her mother had packed a banana in her lunchbox the day before, and when she produced it, a group of boys made fun of her. It turned out all the girls had experienced a similar situation, and none brought bananas to school anymore. It was very difficult for the writer to explain how they did not need to change their habits just because it was not approved by the boys, but they all practiced saying assertive "I-statements". They practiced saying these statements in hypothetical situations where a boy was offending them, but the writer was aware that this was not a skill they completely mastered. They ended the group aware of assertiveness,

and they all stated on the questionnaires that they felt more confident. However, in practice, they were still very unsure of this skill.

Two girls did not appear to understand many of the concepts. When the group was identifying negative advertisements in magazines, these two simply wanted to identify "cute" boys in Teen magazine. Later, when trying to explain the difference between an aggressive response and an assertive response. the writer asked how they would handle a boy who would make fun of a particular part of their body. One of the girls responded that she would just "kick him" in her word for his private parts. She never could understand why she should bother with any other way of approaching the situation. The other girl, however, did come up to the writer with a problem she was having with her older brother, who was being a bit of a bully to her, and she seemed willing to attempt to use the assertiveness skills we practiced in the group.

Towards the end of the practicum, the girls planned a pizza picnic and invited their mothers. A local pizza store donated seven pizzas, and the girls decided who should bring the cookies, brownies, popcorn, potato chips, and soda. They worked together

very cooperatively and were very excited about inviting their mothers. Twelve of the twenty mothers accepted, and permissions were gathered. On the day of the picnic, excitement ran very high because the girls recognized that it was very special to have a mother-daughter event. All through the morning, several girls visited the writer's office to review the release procedures and to make sure various food stuffs arrived. At the appointed hour, all the girls and their mothers gathered at the front entrance and en masse walked to a local park. On the way they sang a song they had created about "Girls are cool, Don't expect us to follow the rule."

At the park, the seven pizzas, plus an unmeasurable amount of popcorn, chips, cookies, and popsicles were devoured and then the girls ran off to play. The writer sat with the mothers and received very positive reviews of the effects they had seen in their daughters. They all asked the writer if she were going to continue the group next year and if there was a similar group at the middle school. It appeared that the girls shared many of the topics covered in the group with their mothers. One mother particularly was thankful the writer had covered harassment from the

boys. Another was thankful the girls considered the different kinds of female bodies and could recognize that not everyone could remain stick-thin. Another commented that her daughter had brought home a great deal of information on the influence of the media, and frequently commented on things she saw on television. Several commented on the conversation about the banana, and were shocked that such pressure was already placed upon their daughters. The writer shared with them the new book Raising a Daughter: Parents and the Awakening of a Healthy Woman, and described many of the things the mothers could do to continue the personal growth of their daughters.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

The problem addressed by this practicum was that young girls approached early adolescence without a strong self-image or sense of self-confidence needed to combat sexual bias or harassment in their environment. They were heavily affected by the media images of the ideal female, and they had begun to develop a negative body-image. They had not been taught the skills to identify and respond to incidents of sexual bias or harassment by their peers. Furthermore, they were not fully aware of sexual bias against girls in their literature.

Though the original design called for twenty girls, there was such an enthusiastic response from twenty-two girls, the writer decided to increase the number who could participate. Two girls moved away after three months, and one girl dropped out; during

the third month, a mother presented herself to the writer and begged that her daughter be allowed to participate. Therefore, nineteen girls completed the entire program and one girl joined late, leaving twenty to give a final evaluation at the end.

There were two general goals for this practicum. The first was that the girls would develop a stronger self-image and sense of self-confidence needed to develop a healthy attitude towards their femaleness. The second was that the girls would learn specific skills needed to combat sexual bias and harassment in their environment. Overall, these goals were met.

Originally, the expectation was that sixteen of the twenty girls participating would successfully identify patterns of stereotyping of females in magazines, television, and advertisements as measured by an evaluation of a chapter in their notebook. However, it became apparent soon into this practicum that an organized notebook in which each girl individually selected and added pieces was not an optimal approach. They enjoyed the decoration of this notebook, but they relied upon the writer to provide them with examples which they happily added to their

notebook. Therefore, there was little difference between the notebooks.

It was also expected that sixteen of the twenty girls would demonstrate that they had a positive and realistic vision of healthy bodies through the successful development of a magazine to be distributed to the fourth and fifth grades. This expectation was not realized because the girls did not wish to create a magazine. Perhaps this was due to the fact that they met during their lunch and recess hour and did not want to do formal "work".

Because the girls became very interested in Women's History Month, the order of the objectives was altered so that they could focus on the bulletin board project in a timely fashion. Upon completing this unit, they then focused on the development of assertiveness skills and the identification of sexual bias. In addition, the success of the girls' state basketball team resulted in a rearrangement of the order of activities, with a focus on positive, healthy athletic female bodies paralleling the news.

All twenty girls participated in completing te questonnaires. On the self-confidence inventory (Table 2), all twenty girls responded that they felt an

Table 2
Self-Confidence Inventory

1. Self-confidence

not confident = 0
moderately confident = 4
very confident = 16

2. Speaking up for myself

holding back = 0
being assertive = 20

3. Noticing stereotypes in the magazines

not very aware = 0
very aware = 20

4. Handling boys who are teasing me because of girl things

not very good = 1
moderately good = 7
very good = 12

5. Bringing to an adult's attention sexual harassment

couldn't do it at all = 3
could do it somewhat = 10
can do it easily = 7

6. Noticing biases in textbooks and lessons

not aware at all = 0
very aware = 20

PART TWO:

Number of girls	Score
16	10
1	8
2	7
1	Incomplete

increase in confidence as a result of the program. Sixteen circled "very confident" and four marked half-way between "not confident" and "very confident". All twenty felt they had learned how to speak up for themselves, and they circled they had learned how to be "assertive". All twenty felt they were "very aware" of stereotypes in magazines. Twelve felt they had become "very good" at handling boys who were teasing them because of girl things, one felt she was still "not very good", and seven felt they were in the middle. Seven felt they could bring sexual harassment to an adult's attention, while three felt they still "couldn't do it at all", and ten felt they were in the middle. All twenty felt they were "very aware" of biases in textbooks and lessons.

On the survey designed to determine the girls awareness of sexist situations (Table 3), the girls responded to particular incidents provided by the writer. In an attempt to quantify the responses, one point was given for each positive self-statement, one point for each statement recognizing bias or harassment, and one point for each statement that suggested changing the situation, with a possible high score of twelve for the four stories. Overall, there

Table 3
Awareness of Sexism

1. Situation 1

   Positive self-statement = 9
   Recognition of bias or harassment = 6
   Suggestions for change = 4

2. Situation 2

   Positive self-statement = 12
   Recognition of bias or harassment = 4
   Suggestions for change = 15

3. Situation 3

   Positive self-statement = 3
   Recognition of bias or harassment = 4
   Suggestions for change = 11

4. Situation 4

   Positive self-statement = 4
   Recognition of bias or harassment = 3
   Suggestions for change = 9

5. Situation 5

   Positive self-statement = 2
   Recognition of bias or harassment = 17
   Suggestions for change = 9

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were fairly high scores indicating this goal was achieved. Sixteen of the girls wrote statements that resulted in a score of ten, one had eight, two had seven, and one did not complete the exercise.

On the evaluation by peers on their assertiveness (Table 4), the results were inconclusive. None of the girls felt her partner clearly stated what was upsetting her, twelve felt they did so moderately, and six felt they did not do so at all. Only two felt their partners used strong I-statements, while eleven felt they did so moderately and four felt they did not use one at all. Only six felt their partner's reasons were clear, while thirteen felt they were moderately clear, and one felt her partner was not clear at all. Only three felt their partners were very persistent, while ten felt they were moderately persistent, and five felt their partners were not persistent at all. None felt this approach would bring about a change in real life, while eleven felt that it might do so moderately, and five felt it would have no effect at all. Their responses revealed they still had not grasped the full understanding of <u>assertiveness</u> versus <u>aggressiveness</u>. Such responses as "Fight back," "Call him a name,", "Tell him to stop being a baby," "That it

Table 4
Evaluation by Peers: Assertiveness

---

1. Did she state clearly what was upsetting her?
   Yes, very well = 0
   Moderately = 12
   Not at all= 6
   No response = 2

2. Did she use an I-statement?
   Yes, very well = 2
   Moderately = 11
   Not at all = 4
   No response = 3

3. Were her reasons clear?
   Yes, very well = 6
   Moderately = 13
   Not at all = 1

4. Did she keep at it?
   Yes, very well = 3
   Moderately = 10
   Not at all = 2
   No response = 5

5. Do you think it would bring about a change in real life?
   Yes, very well = 0
   Moderately = 11
   Not at all = 5
   No response = 4

What would you do in this situation?
Sample responses:
-- Fight back.
-- Call him a name.
-- Tell him to stop being a baby.
-- That it is none of his business.
-- I'd just kick him.

is none of his business," and finally, "I just kick him" reveal more exercises in this area were warranted.

On the final survey, the girls were asked to evaluate whether or not they felt their participation in the bulletin board and public demonstration project had helped them feel more positively about being a girl (Table 5). All twenty circled "strongly agree" as a response to each statement made. They all felt they had learned more about gender bias and gender inequities. They all felt they learned a great deal working with the other girls. They all felt the group had changed the way they felt as girls. When asked to circle adjectives which described themselves, all the girls circled the more positive descriptions. Nineteen circled "pleased", eighteen circled "powerful", eighteen circled "happy", seventeen circled "strong", fifteen circled "motivated", fourteen circled "beautiful", sixteen circled "successful", twelve circled "zappy", eleven circled "dynamite", and two circled "wow", . Of the calmer descriptions, seven circled "better",four circled "shy", four circled "cautious", one circled "quiet", and one circled "peaceful". None circled "drippy", "unsure", or "scared".

Table 5
Final Inventory

1. This project helped me learn a great deal about gender bias and gender inequities
   Strongly disagree = 0
   Strongly agree = 20
2. I learned a lot putting it together and working with the other girls.
   Strongly disagree = 0
   Strongly agree = 20
3. I think I was able to get the idea across to the other girls.
   Strongly disagree = 0
   Strongly agree = 20
4. I think this project has changed the way I think about being a girl.
   Strongly disagree = 0
   Strongly agree = 20

Number of girls who circled the following adjectives:

strong: 17	beautiful: 14	unsure: 0
shy: 0	dynamite: 11	wow: 2
quiet: 1	cautious: 4	scared: 0
peaceful: 1	pleased: 19	successful: 16
motivated: 15	drippy: 0	zappy: 12
powerful: 18	better: 7	happy: 18

Ten sentences were completed from these adjectives:

1. I feel strong, motivated, powerful, dynamite, better, successful, zappy, thanks to (the writer), wow!
2. I am a shy, quiet, motivated, sort-of-beautiful, pleased, successful, and happy girl.
3. With the girls club, I've become stronger, happier, more powerful over boys and I think someday I'll become successful.
4. I feel I am very successful.
5. I think I am strong, shy, quiet, peaceful, and beautiful.
6. I think I am peaceful, beautiful, cautious, and happy, but I am scared to go to the middle school.
7. I am still shy and quiet but not as much as I was before, because I feel happy about being a girl and I am beautiful (sometimes).
8. Now I am strong and happy.
9. Wow, I am pleased I am a powerful and successful girl.
10. I think that I am now powerful, motivated, beautiful, happy and successful, thanks to the Girls Club.

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Ten girls completed the final aspect of this survey where they had to write one sentence about themselves using as many of the adjectives listed above as possible. They are all strong, positive statements about being a girl.

Finally, the writer evaluated their notebooks of information gathered throughout the practicum. None met the original expectations, and some were totally incomplete. The girls fell into the pattern of copying each other and soon all notebooks looked alike. However, they were all able to identify and explain each chapter. All took them home to show their mothers.

Discussion

Each topic and unit discussed brought up an unexpected result. Throughout the entire six-month period, the girls maintained a high level of enthusiasm, and the writer heard from several mothers that the girls reported about each session with great relish. When the writer announced it was time to plan the final party and that the group was coming to an end, they were very vocal about their disappointment. Three girls said they wished they could do it again.

The final evaluations were very revealing. Overall, the results indicated that the girls felt the group had been tremendously influential. They all felt more capable in identifying sexist patterns in books and media and learning how to stand up for themselves. They were able to pick out positive self-descriptive statements, and the conversation in the room at the time indicated they had a great deal of fun doing it. They urged the writer to continue the group for next year's fifth grade girls.

The group had an impact upon other areas in the building. Several teachers approached the writer for information they could incorporate into their classrooms, and the large bulletin board the girls made was received with much enthusiasm by the whole school.

One English teacher supplied the writer with a short composition written by one of the fifth grade girls in which she described the Girls Club. She wrote, "This club has made me more confident to stand up to people and has also brought out how famous women realy are. In March, (National Women's History Month), our club worked really hard on making people recognize how important women really are. We made a bulletin

board of famous women, and I think her (the writer's) picture should of been up there" (McMahon, 1995).

Recommendations

The success of this group suggested it should be repeated each year. On the final questionnaires, each girl responded extremely positively about it. Perhaps the factor that ensured its success is that each girl felt that being a member of the group was a special honor. It provided a vehicle for twenty girls to form a bond with each other where the theme was specifically the specialness of girls. Frequently, other girls who had not initially signed up asked for information about the group, and the girls responded that it was their group, and they should not be disturbed.

Each session was a cacaphony of enthusiastic voices, perhaps as a result of having it scheduled during the lunch period. Because the group was so large, it was often difficult to keep the group on the topic of the day. The format encouraged each girl to participate, and in this area this particular group exceeded the writer's expectations. If a group leader felt it was crucial to impart certain information and to present information didactically, a smaller group

might be more functional. However, by decreasing the size, a leader might sacrifice spontaneity.

During the session when the film (Pollack and Widmann, 1995) was shown which displayed some of the pictures of crowds pelting the suffragettes with tomatoes and paint, most of the girls were very interested. However, three girls found it "boring", perhaps because it too much resembled a regular class. The writer had to walk a fine line between imparting information and soliciting reactions from the group, and she discovered that the girls could only absorb a little bit of information at one time. Each new topic brought a tremendous reaction from the girls -- some of which led us to unexpected territories.

It soon proved that formal lessons or work might dampen their enthusiasm. They did not want to fill out worksheets, read passages, or to participate in small groups when the task appeared to be work. Consequently, the notebook resulted in not being filled with as much individual work as had been hoped. Though they loved their collages on their notebooks, and many hope to use them next year in the Middle School, they simply wanted to fill it with Xerox copies of information brought in by the writer. For this reason,

the unit on examining stereotypes in their literature and textbooks was a low point in the project. As soon as the group went onto a new topic, famous women in history, their interest returned with vigor.

This particular project limited the writer to a specific plan. Several times, the girls asked questions or brought in information which could have led the group into new territory. For example, one girl came in with a small scrapbook from her grandmother who recalled her mother as a suffragette. Several girls then chimed in with stories about their grandmothers (one had been in a concentration camp), and they came up with the idea of writing their grandmothers to find out what it was like to be a girl when they were young. They were beginning to understand that the pictures of the suffragettes in old-fashioned costumes were really women, who had been girls once also! One girl had a great-grandmother alive, and she brought in a letter from her which described the kinds of clothes she had to wear in the twenties. The writer was required to bring the group back onto the topic, but it was a lost moment. Future groups should be allowed to explore new areas and develop original projects. A project which allowed the

girls to trace the history of their grandmothers would have been interesting to all the girls and would have provided them with a good sense of the evolution of women during this century.

The use of the materials from the Women's History Project resulted after the girls decided they wanted their bulletin board to coincide with the Women's Month. Future groups should definitely build goals around this, because it was a concrete project in which each girl could actively participate. One of the girls was African-American, and she was elated that several of the women pictured were black or Hispanic.

The writer asked for volunteers from the entire fifth grade. However, several girls she had expected to sign up did not, and later it was learned they did not do so because they did not think the "cool" girls would sign up. Yet, these were the same girls who later were so very curious about what was happening in the art room. Now that this group has been successfully completed, it is expected that future groups will be over subscribed.

Future groups might focus more on developing the girls' assertiveness skills. Though this was covered, the girls needed more practice. It was difficult for

them to clarify the difference between assertive and aggressive reactions -- particularly when they were faced with a hostile or aggressive action. They practiced saying "I-messages" or statements designed to stop a particular action by a boy, and they would come to the writer several times during the day to report on their success. Unfortunately, several times the girls were faced with unfriendly statements made by groups of boys and they were very suspicious of these techniques during these circumstances. However, overall, they felt they had learned how to be more assertive in speaking up for themselves.

Finally, future leaders should consider that the most important factor which brought about the success of this group was that it provided a vehicle for girls to come together and reinforce the idea that being a girl was very special. Pre-adolescent girls are less interested in the theories and concepts of gender equity and equal rights than they are about the facts of their lives and their feelings about the changes they are going through.

Dissemination

Towards the end of this project, the writer was asked by the local branch of the American Association

of University Women to present some information on sexual harassment. Besides presenting facts related to older children, the writer also provided information drawn from this project. She has been asked to head the local division of the Hostile Hallways Project and to serve on the local Board of Directors. This alone provides avenues through which the writer can share with interested parties the importance of early intervention with pre-adolescent girls. The writer has been asked to present this project to the annual convention of the American Association of University Women next year, and to use this practicum as a template to assist other groups to be formed.

This writer has been approached about presenting the findings from this project to the American Counseling Association's annual convention next year. There is a dearth of information on the pre-adolescent girl, and this information is seen as new and refreshing.

The writer has been asked to submit a summary of this project to Dialog, the journal of the Connecticut Counseling and Development Association. Finally, the writer is planning on writing a book designed for both

parents and educators focuing on the pre-adolescent girl.

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APPENDIX A

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

To: Mothers of third, fourth and fifth grade girls

Please complete the following questionnaire and return it to the office in the enclosed envelope as soon as possible.

==========

Directions: Circle the number that corresponds with your thoughts as they apply to your daughter.

==========

1= strongly disagree
2= mildly disagree
3= neutral
4= mildly agree
5= strongly agree
N= not applicable

1. I think my daughter has a strong sense of who she is now.	1	2	3	4	5	N
2. I think my daughter feels good about her body as it is now.	1	2	3	4	5	N
3. I think my daughter is heavily influenced by media images of the ideal female.	1	2	3	4	5	N
4. I think my daughter has learned how to avoid confrontation.	1	2	3	4	5	N
5. I think my daughter feels positively about her body changing.	1	2	3	4	5	N
6. I think my daughter holds back her true abilities so as to not stand out.	1	2	3	4	5	N
7. I think my daughter has experienced harassment from the boys.	1	2	3	4	5	N
8. I think my daughter would know how to handle sexual harassment from her peers.	1	2	3	4	5	N
9. I think my daughter is better in verbal areas than in math.	1	2	3	4	5	N
10. I have heard my daughter complain that she is fat.	1	2	3	4	5	N
11. I think my daughter is worried about the way she looks.	1	2	3	4	5	N

12. I think my daughter prefers science and math tasks to those involving reading and language.	1	2	3	4	5	N
13. I think my daughter could identify several women in history who were famous for their own achievements.	1	2	3	4	5	N
14. I have heard my daughter say things just aren't fair for a girl.	1	2	3	4	5	N
15. I think my daughter has good eating habits.	1	2	3	4	5	N
16. I think the educational materials presented to her present an equitable vision of women.	1	2	3	4	5	N
17. I think my daughter is getting the same treatment in school as a boy.	1	2	3	4	5	N
18. I think my daughter's school is sensitive to issues around gender equity.	1	2	3	4	5	N
19. I think my daughter is aware of non-traditional occupations open to women.	1	2	3	4	5	N
20. I think that in many ways my daughter's learning patterns are like mine.	1	2	3	4	5	N

Subjects concerning the development of young girls I am particularly concerned about:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR GIRLS MEASURING DEGREE OF SELF-CONFIDENCE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

GIRLS SELF-CONFIDENCE INVENTORY

Directions: Please place an X on the line where you feel you would describe yourself after this program:

1. Self-confidence

not confident very confident

Comments:

2. Speaking up for myself

holding back being assertive

Comments:

3. Noticing stereotypes in the magazines

not aware at all very aware

Comments:

4. Handling boys who are teasing me because of girl things

not very good very good

Comments:

5. Bringing to an adult's attention sexual harassment

couldn't do it at all can do it easily

Comments:

6. Noticing biases in textbooks and lessons

not aware at all very aware

Comments:

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR GIRLS ON RECOGNIGTION OF SEXISM

Please read the following stories, and then answer the questions:

1. Samantha climbed on the bus in the morning, and was very worried about where she would sit. She was always the last one on the bus, and usually all the seats were taken. This time was no different. When she got on, she made her way down the aisle, and all of the seats with the girls were taken. The spied a seat in the back with the boys. She started to go for it, when a boy moved into that seat, saying, "You can't sit here because you are a girl."

What is your feeling about this situation?

2. A group of girls were sitting at the lunch table giggling and talking about the boys. All of them had brought lunches from home -- homemade sandwiches, cookies, some fruit, and some juice -- and they were trading parts back and forth. All of the girls were eleven years old, and one girl's body had begun to change. Her breasts were showing under her tee shirt, and her hips were filling out a bit. When asked if she wanted to share a peanut butter sandwich, she said, "No, I need to go on a diet."

What is your feeling about this situation?

3. The school election was coming up, and Susie was running for president. She was running against Tom, who was very popular. She was extremely smart, and all the other girls thought she stuck to herself. She drew many posters, and hung them around the school. On the day of the election, Ms. Combes asked her how her campaign was going. "Oh," she said, "I probably won't win anyway. Nobody would vote for a girl anyway."

What is your feeling about this situation?

4. The girls were on the playground, swinging on the swings, and talking in small groups. Tom, a shy and quiet boy, came over and wanted to play on the swings with them. Trish, the most popular girl, yelled to him, "No, you can't play here, this is the girls area."

What is your feeling about this situation?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

5. Eileen and Andrea were outside helping to dismiss the buses. Two boys came out, and began teasing the girls. They challenged them to see if they could touch their elbows behind their back. The girls tried it, and couldn't do it. The boys were giggling.

What is your feeling about this situation?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

SCORING: Each positive self-statement= 1 point
Each statement recognizing bias or harassment = 1 point
Each statement suggesting changing situation = 1 point

APPENDIX D

EVALUATION BY PEERS: ASSERTIVENESS

Girls: Please place an X on the line closest to where you think the girl you observed fit:

Name of observer:_____Girl observed:_____
What was the situation:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

==========

Did she state clearly what was upsetting her?

Not at all _____ yes, very well

Did she use an I-statement?

Not at all _____ Yes, very well

Were her reasons clear?

Not at all _____ Yes, very well

Did she keep at it?

Not at all _____ Yes, very well

Do you think it would bring about a change in real life?

Not at all _____ Yes, definitely

ON THE BACK, PLEASE WRITE WHAT YOU WOULD NORMALLY DO IN THIS SITUATION.

APPENDIX E

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR GIRLS: FINAL INVENTORY

FINAL INVENTORY

Each girl will complete the following questionnaire upon the completion of this project:

1. This project helped me learn a great deal about gender bias and gender inequities.

Strongly Disagree _____ Strongly Agree

2. I learned a lot putting it together and working with the other girls.

Strongly Disagree _____ Strongly Agree

3. I think I was able to get the idea across to the other girls.

Strongly Disagree _____ Strongly Agree

4. I think this project has changed the way I think about being a girl.

Strongly Disagree _____ Strongly Agree

5. Please circle the words which you think describe yourself now that you have completed the program:

strong	beautiful	unsure
shy	dynamite	wow
quiet	cautious	scared
peaceful	pleased	successful
motivated	drippy	zappy
powerful	better	happy

Write one sentence about yourself using as many of these words as you can:

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX F

CORRESPONDENCE

9 Harrison Street
Danbury, Ct. 06810

Ms. Nan Stein
Center for Research on Women
Wellesley College
Wellesley, Ma. 02191-8259

Dear Ms. Stein,

I am currently writing a doctoral proposal for a project involving gender equity for upper elementary aged girls, and in my review of research I have pulled many facts from your booklet entitled Secrets in Public: Sexual Harassment in Public (and Private) Schools.

Specifically, I have quoted your guidelines defining harassment according to the EEOC on page 25, the definition of sexual harassment from the Office for Civil Rights on page 26, and used some of the examples given on pages 4 through 6, though I did not directly quote you there.

I would like to receive permission from you to use this information. I am designing a curriculum designed for girls in grades four and five which will focus on harassment, assertiveness, stereotyping, self-esteem, and body-image. I will be establishing a mothers' group to work with me and I hope to bring the mothers and girls together on some project.

Would you have any specific information on gender equity issues related to elementary-aged girls? I have found that most of the work has been done with middle and high-school aged girls; I think most people think elementary children are neuter, and therefore they look the other way.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Alice S. Combes

VETERANS PARK SCHOOL
RIDGEFIELD, CT. 06877

May 13, 1994

Dear Parents,

I have been very interested in pursuing gender equity issues here at Veterans Park School. Before I proceed, however, I would like to get some feedback from the parents. I have been working closely with Leslie Pirotta, the President of the PTA, and we have decided that at this point we would first ask the mothers of <u>girls</u> to answer the enclosed questionnaire. There is a great deal of information developing about gender equity issues as they relate to girls, but not that much as it relates to boys. We would like to pursue boy-related issues at a later date. After all, as society is changing, the relationships between girls and boys no longer follow traditional patterns, and both sexes must learn how to deal with the changes.

In the fall, I am hoping to develop a gender equity program covering many different topics. I would appreciate it if you would complete the questionnaire, as it would give me a great deal of guidance.

Please return it in the enclosed envelope to the office by May 20. There will be a box on the PTA counter.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Alice S. Combes
Guidance Counselor